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Stephen H. Tyng Jr

UNDER CANVAS;

OR,

TENT WORSHIP IN SUMMER MONTHS.

EMBRACING

CONTRIBUTIONS OF EMINENT CLERGYMEN,

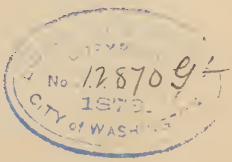
OF ALL DENOMINATIONS;

AND MUCH GENERAL AND VALUABLE INFORMATION ON THE GOSPEL TENT, A MEANS FOR SUMMER WORSHIP AND REVIVAL.

BY

WILLIAM B. MUCKLOW.

"A CLOUD COVERED THE TENT OF THE CONGREGATION, AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE TABERNACLE."—*Exod. xl.*, 34.



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TO

THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D.,

RECTOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY,

(FORTY-SECOND STREET AND MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK,)

IN CONSIDERATION OF HIS UNWEARIED LABORS IN THE LORD'S CAUSE, AND AS THE ORIGINATOR OF THE GOSPEL TENT, A MEANS FOR SUMMER WORSHIP AND REVIVAL, AS WELL AS IN CONSIDERATION OF MANY ACTS OF LOVE AND KINDNESS RECEIVED AT HIS HANDS,

THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY HIS FAITHFUL AND OBLIGED SERVANT,

THE COMPILER.

PREFACE.

THE special religious services carried on in the Gospel Tent, in Thirty-Fourth street, New York City, during the exceptionally hot summer of 1876, were so unprecedented both in character and result, that no excuse or apology need be made for this publication, the main object of which will be accomplished if, in the future, the Lord has dedicated to Him canvas tabernacles in the principal cities of the United States, wherein to proclaim His glorious Gospel during the summer months.

It is to be sincerely hoped that the excellent and varied matter contributed to this book by God's appointed servants, will be circulated and read to the honor and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with that prayer it is sent forth to the people. It will be found that the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, is proclaimed with great plainness of speech and in no uncertain key. May sinners read and be converted; saints edified and strengthened in grace and knowledge; and God grant that not one word in the following pages may be written contrary to His Divine will, or prove a stumbling block to either saint or sinner.

Sincere and grateful thanks are returned to the many kind friends who have so generously assisted in the compilation of the volume.

W. B. M.

NEW YORK CITY, November 7th, 1876.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE.

INTRODUCTORY..... 9

CHAPTER II.

TENT WORSHIP.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D.,..... 19

CHAPTER III.

THE LOST SHEEP SOUGHT AND FOUND.—Rev. Robert Russell Booth, D.D.,... 32

CHAPTER IV.

INDECISION.—Rev. William Lloyd..... 40

CHAPTER V.

SELF-CONDEMNATION.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D.,..... 47

CHAPTER VI.

FAITH.—Rev. C. C. Tiffany..... 58

CHAPTER VII.

VAIN EXCUSES.—Rev. J. D. Herr..... 66

CHAPTER VIII.

ONE THING IS NEEDFUL.—Rev. William S. Rainsford, B.A.,..... 76

CHAPTER IX.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.—General Henry Edwin Tremain..... 81

CHAPTER X.

Touching Jesus.—Rev. L. G. Barrett..... 90

CHAPTER XI.

Great Salvation.—Rev. William Lloyd..... 97

CHAPTER XII.

Let us Alone.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D.,.....104

CHAPTER XIII.

The Valley of Decision.—Rev. Joseph Odell.....116

CHAPTER XIV.

The Burden in Word and in Wear.—Rev. Joseph Odell.....121

CHAPTER XV.

Value of a Soul.—Rev. William S. Rainsford, B.A.,.....126

CHAPTER XVI.

How to Please God.—Rev. William Humpstone.....132

CHAPTER XVII.

Christ's Appeal for Admission.—Rev. J. W. Bonham.....138

CHAPTER XVIII.

Finished Salvation.—Rev. Dana M. Walcott.....146

CHAPTER XIX.

Good News From a Far Country.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D.....152

CHAPTER XX.

What Are You Going to Do?—Rev. J. Spencer Kennard.....163

CHAPTER XXI.

Christ our Rock, Refuge and Refreshment.—Rev. Wm. Ormiston, D.D., 171

CHAPTER XXII.

Jesus Knocketh, Knocketh at thy Door.—Rev. William Lloyd.....182

CHAPTER XXIII.

NOT YET.—Rev. Charles F. Deems, D.D.,.....189

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WORLD.—Rev. William S. Rainsford, B.A.,.....201

CHAPTER XXV.

LOVE TO JESUS.—Rev. William S. Rainsford, B.A.,.....209

CHAPTER XXVI.

GREAT GLADNESS AND JOY.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D.,.....218

CHAPTER XXVII.

WINNING SOULS TO JESUS, AND SOULS WON.—W. B. Mucklow.....231

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GOSPEL TENT HYMNS AND TUNES.—Prof. Theodore E. Perkins.....243

CHAPTER XXIX.

SOWING THE SEED.—A. S. Emmons.....255

CHAPTER XXX.

FREE SALVATION.—Rev. David Inglis, D.D.,.....262

CHAPTER XXXI.

GLAD TIDINGS BY YOUNG SOLDIERS.—William P. Griffith.....268

CHAPTER XXXII.

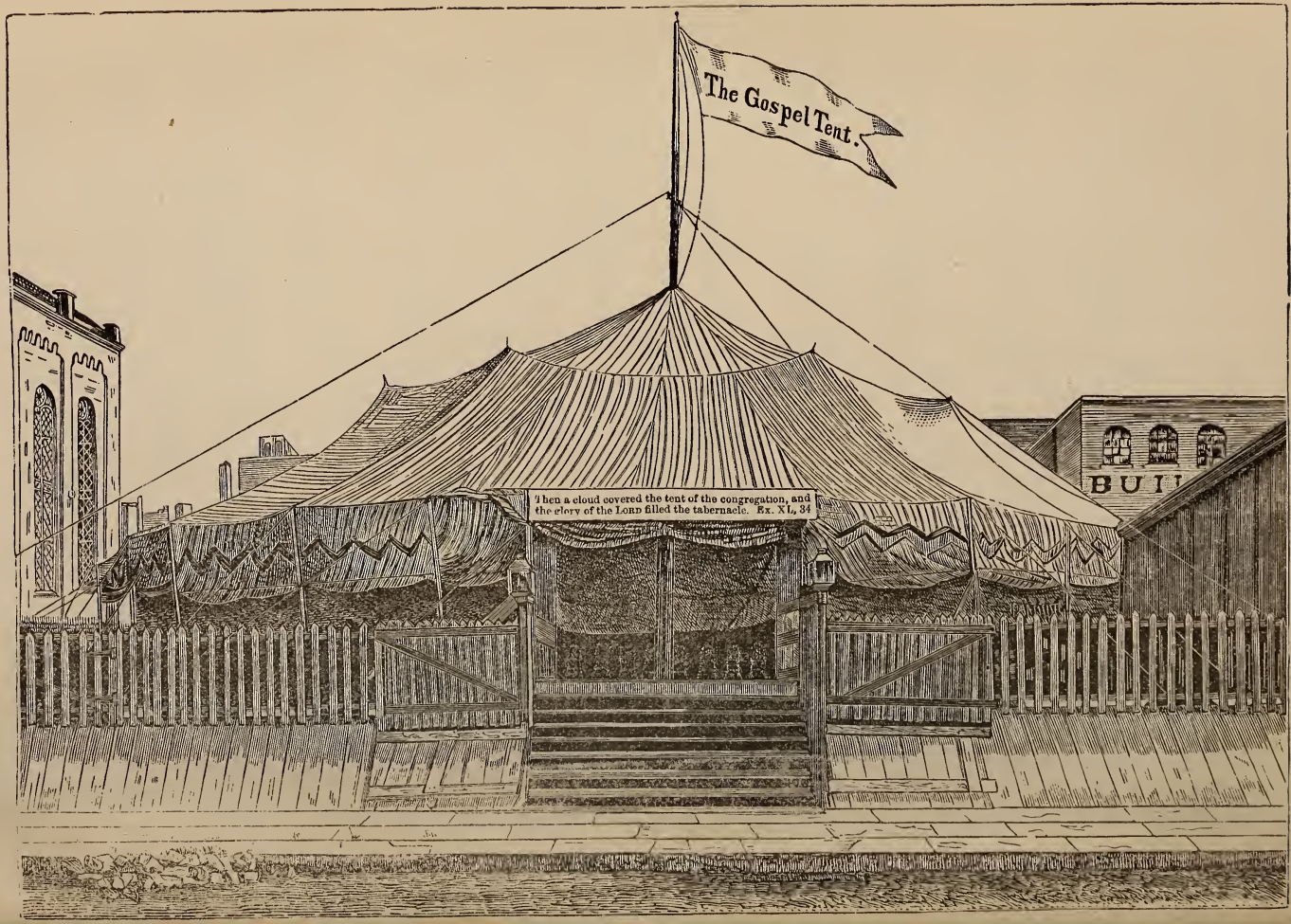
WINDOWS OF THE WORD, For S. S. Teachers.—Rev. S. H. Tyng, jr., D.D.,..277

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LONG WALK, For Young Converts.—Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D.,..287

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCLUSION.....296


The Gospel Tent.
Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Ex. XL, 34

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

It will scarcely be denied that religious fervor and earnest Christian work have hitherto been conspicuous only by their absence during the summer months. And why? We confess that to sit in a luxurious church supplied with all the requisites for warmth and comfort during the winter, is, after all, but a poor place in which to listen to the Word of Life with the thermometer high up in the "nineties." To do so is to put a severe and needless strain on the system, and many a constitution must have been seriously impaired through it. It is a true statement that the churches of this city, and indeed elsewhere, are not suitable for holding religious services during the months of June, July and August; much less are they fitted for revival meetings, by which means the masses are chiefly reached. They have, therefore, been mostly closed during the hot weather, and the regenerate and unregenerate left pretty much to take care of themselves during that special season of the year. One cannot be surprised to learn—indeed, it is a natural consequence—that on the re-opening of the churches in the fall, the pastors are grieved to find a marked indifference and coolness on the part of their flocks in regard to things spiritual. The first thing, then, to be done is to arouse the congregation from this sad state of mind, but, unfortunately, by the time this is accomplished, and a blessed fervor and holy atmosphere are attained, the long vacation again sets in. How can this missing link in what should be an endless chain of Christian activity be provided against? Are there no means whereby the end of the chain which drops in June and the end which is taken up in September can be successfully connected? Surely so, for it is impossible to be blind to the evil effects which are engendered by the present system, and we apprehend that any plan which provides an effectual remedy against them will be

heartily welcomed both by the ambassadors of Christ and the children of God.

We hesitate not to say that the desired remedy is to be found in the Gospel Tent. Under the airy canvas, as it lazily sways to and fro in the gentlest breeze, thousands and tens of thousands of people can be gathered during the hottest evenings of the year, who would never think of submitting their enfeebled frames to the stifling air to be found within four walls.

There are very many advantages to which the Gospel Tent can justly lay claim. In addition to sustaining the religious interest of church-goers, it is also an inexpensive and effective means of reaching the masses. Poor people will readily venture into the novel and primitive tabernacle, who, for obvious reasons, would never think of taking their seats in one of the many elegant churches so thickly scattered in and around a large city like New York. There is an absence of restraint, a homelike feeling, a consciousness of equality, a knowledge that one is heartily welcome to the seat occupied, to be experienced in the tent, which, somehow or other, seems to leave a favorable and lasting impression upon those who come under canvas to hear God's proclamation of the Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ.

Whilst we believe that the Gospel Tent is the only feasible plan for keeping up the interest of Christians in religious matters during the summer, we do not for a moment say, or wish it to be inferred, that there are not other means of reaching non-church goers. For instance, open-air Gospel meetings cannot be too highly praised. Would that instead of a dozen or so having been held in different parts of New York City, during the past season, under the auspices of that excellent institution, the Young Men's Christian Association, there had been, at least, a thousand young men redeemed by grace, shouting forth at street corners the glad tidings of their salvation, and inviting all men to come and "take of the waters of life freely." Some of these meetings have been richly blest in the salvation of immortal souls, whilst the young soldiers of the Cross have themselves been quickened by the Holy Spirit, and strengthened in grace and boldness of speech. But yet, it must be admitted that the Gospel Tent possesses not a few advantages over the open-air services. The dust, the sun, the noise, the occasional shower, are all avoided, to say nothing of the great boon of seats, and the acoustic properties of the canvas. This last is of vast importance and cannot be overestimated. A still greater point has, however, to be mentioned, viz: the facilities of speaking privately to the anxious souls—an opportunity, the loss of which is sadly felt in the street meetings. Nevertheless, the spread and increase of open-air Gospel services cannot be otherwise than

most joyfully and encouragingly hailed. If all the Christian young men of New York had but the courage to stand up for Jesus, their Master, and publicly announce to the thousands of perishing souls around them, that they had "found the pearl of greatest price," there would be the mightiest and most glorious revival ever witnessed since the death of our Saviour.

If we can satisfactorily show, that by means of these canvas edifices, the interest of the people can be successfully sustained during the summer, it will be found that upon the re-opening of the churches in the fall, there will be a strong and healthy feeling *in their favor* instead of, as hitherto, *against* them.

But over and above this, are there any valid reasons why the children of God should practically forsake their calling, and neglect their imperative duty, of winning souls to Christ during a particular season of the year? No such reasons can be found in the Word, nor is a dying soul of any less value in July than January. This Christian lethargy is a subject for profound sorrow, and we esteem it a high privilege to be permitted to give in this publication the record of a real and great summer revival, a thing regarded as almost, if not entirely, out of the question in this city; the record of a June, July, August and September campaign for the Lord, carried on under canvas, and resulting in the salvation of hundreds of souls; the record of a Gospel Tent in New York City, which held up its head month after month against the occasional storms of the elements, and the rare uncharitableness of a very few persons. Better still, it is the record of a tabernacle dedicated to the Lord, in which Christ and Christ crucified was held up alike by Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and other denominations. The salvation of lost sinners, and the quickening of God's people, were the sole objects of the work, and sectarianism found no platform on which to bicker or argue over dogmas or anything else capable of a difference of opinion or construction.

At the conclusion of the great work carried on for many weeks in the Hippodrome, New York, by Messrs. Moody and Sankey, the Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D. D., commenced revival services in his Church of the Holy Trinity, situate in Madison avenue and Forty-second street, and they only came to an end when the heat gave warning to discontinue them in the month of June last. Previous to their close, however, workmen were busily engaged in the erection of a mammoth tent on Thirty-fourth street, near Sixth avenue, for use during the summer. The originator of this novel enterprise was the Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, whose portrait our readers will find at the commencement of this volume.

The *Evening Post* of June 7, 1876, in noticing the subject,

said: "The tent is intended to afford opportunity for worship "and instruction not only to the resident population of the city, "but to strangers who will visit us during the centennial sum- "mer, and will doubtless prove a valuable aid to Christian "work during the hot months, when so many of the churches of "the city are closed. The Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., will con- "duct the services, and be assisted in the preaching by other "clergymen. It is expected that a distinguished English clergy- "man, the Rev. Wm. S. Rainsford, of Norwich, England, will "make an evangelistic visit to this country and be heard in this "tent."

If the secular press did not materially assist the enterprise after it came into operation, it must be confessed it was very extensively advertised, and that too without cost, by the New York papers, previous to the dedicatory service. From a large number of encouraging and friendly notices we select the following editorial article from the *Tribune* of June 9th, to which we call attention:

"The Rev. Dr. Tyng, jr., whether he is to be classed among his Episcopal brethren as Low, High, or High and Dry, is a gentleman of great activity in the ministry, and of infinite resources. The Church of the Holy Trinity, of which he is the rector, remains in the regular diocese, while it maintains a diocese of its own. It is quite ready to adopt whatever methods of the "sects" it may deem useful in the dissemination of the gospel, even as Dr. Tyng, jr., is ready, or has been, to preach in any hospitable pulpit. Its last device is the erection on Thirty-fourth st., near Sixth ave., of what is called a Gospel Tent, large enough to accommodate a congregation of nearly 3,000 persons; and here during the summer the prayers and preaching will be free to all comers. Dr. Tyng, jr., will conduct the services according, we presume, to such ritual as to him may seem most desirable, and it is intimated that Mr. Rainsford, an English clergyman, will assist. Whether these proceedings of Dr. Tyng, jr., will commend themselves to the bishop of the diocese is a matter, we fancy, of small importance to the rector of the Holy Trinity or to his parishioners. The Doctor may or may not become again liable to a public and official reprimand, but his fear of ecclesiastical discipline is so limited that he will probably be left severely alone. The Bishop of New-York is the wisest of men, and there will be no martyrdom within his jurisdiction while it can possibly be avoided. If Dr. Potter had been Archbishop of Canterbury when John and Charles Wesley betook themselves to preaching in the fields and churchyards, it is doubtful whether there would ever have been any Methodist church, though there might have been a great many Methodists within the church itself.

"Considering the matter from a non-ecclesiastical point of view, we may safely wish Dr. Tyng, jr., and his co-laborers a fruitful season in their Thirty-fourth st. pavilion. There is little danger of over-preaching and praying within the precincts of the Metropolitan Police. It is hardly enough for the tepid good-naturedly to admit that the energetic evangelist can do no harm, for the truth is that it is hardly possible for him to fail of doing much good. Certainly, if the erring will not come to the church, the church must go to the erring. There are those to whom as a matter of taste all "irregular" proceedings are disagreeable, and who see no need of putting up a "Gospel Tent" in Thirty-fourth st. or anywhere else. They have their doubts of the efficacy of camp-meetings or of "revival" services—they prefer to meet within the four walls and below the roof of a consecrated edifice, or, at any rate, under its protecting shadow. They should remember, however, that these extra-mural services are as old as Christianity itself. The very first Christian preaching was field preaching, and the first worship of our faith was celebrated in the highways and byways. If Dr. Tyng, jr., should be so fortunate as to make any converts in his tent, as he probably will, a portion of them at least will go over with him to the Holy Trinity when the tent is struck next autumn; and if the remainder should drift into what precisians contemptuously call "meeting houses," we hope that no harm will come of it. Better there on Sunday than in some places which we might mention, or in some which are unmentionable. The most prosperous churches are those which find something for every earnest man to do in the vineyard; and it is always disheartening to see the very men turned adrift who should be most earnestly entreated to stay. This is a secular opinion, but it may be a sound one nevertheless. So all good success to Dr. Tyng, jr., and his tent!"

The tent was circular in form, one hundred feet in diameter, and forty-five feet high at the grand central pole, which was surmounted by a large flag inscribed with the words "The Gospel Tent" in red letters on a white ground, and the immense spread of canvas in the daytime presented a pleasing appearance, and at night when illuminated within it was most picturesque. A corona of 80 gas burners, suspended from the centre pole, shed ample light to the farthest parts of the building, the platform being additionally lighted with burners at either side of the speaker's desk. The flooring was of wood, to which continuous parallel rows of plain deal chairs were nailed, and the approaches to the platform—two central and two side aisles—were covered with matting. The platform was raised three feet and accommodated 105 persons, and was reserved for the speakers, Christian workers and the choir. The seating capacity of the tent was 1,350, but with the help of

camp stools, and a smaller tent erected to the eastward (forming a transept) used as the inquiry room, upwards of 2,000 people were enabled to take part in the services. It may here be mentioned that Sunday after Sunday during the hottest part of the summer the accommodation was wholly inadequate, and crowds of people, estimated at from two to three thousand, were disappointed in getting inside the tabernacle, whilst the churches in and around the neighborhood, if not closed, (as most of them were), had but a sprinkling of a hundred or so as a congregation. This fact speaks for itself, and bears out our assertion that the churches not being suitable for public worship in extreme hot weather, it is out of the question to expect the public to attend them in any numbers.

The total expense of purchasing and erecting this summer edifice was considerably under $2,000, and, as it will last for several years to come, the Gospel Tent may be considered the cheapest means of public worship yet discovered.

With regard to the mode of conducting the services, there is nothing of greater importance than the singing. An efficient and volunteer choir may be said to accomplish greater things even than the speakers, provided the singing be purely an act of worship. Fifty to sixty voices, with an organ accompaniment under the directorship of Mr. Theodore E. Perkins, did their best during the eighteen weeks revival to lead the congregations in devotional praise, and though it cannot be said that the choir was well trained, or that the singing was very good, yet this part of the services was, on the whole, successfully performed.

It has already been stated that the work was purely undenominational, and in consequence thereof the coöperation of the clergy generally was most hearty and unselfish. The pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church (the Rev. Joseph R. Kerr) which is situate directly opposite the site of the tent, at once promised his aid and sympathy on behalf of the new undertaking, and he faithfully and generously fulfilled the promise. So great were the crowds that came to the tent that overflow meetings had to be held in his church on many occasions, and on the last of these the Rev. Dr. Tyng, jr., took the opportunity of returning thanks to Mr. Kerr and the trustees for their unparalleled (in his experience of fifteen years) act of Christianity. The Rev. J. S. Kennard of the Thirty-third street Baptist Church (a short distance from the summer tabernacle) preached in the tent on the 5th of September, and said on his return to town after the summer vacation, he was gratified to find that many members of his church had been attending the tent services, and had been greatly blessed thereby, and were now ready and anxious to commence earnest work for the winter. Mr. Kennard delivered a

powerful address on the words, "What shall I do, then, with Jesus, which is called Christ?" and for his hire received precious souls, the inquiry room being well attended, and the all-important question of the text was satisfactorily answered by several persons.

The only public opposition or deprecation of the enterprise was sounded at a conference of Methodist ministers when a certain member of that body read a paper which was not merely condemnatory of the Moody and Sankey revivals, but it also contained the most reckless and sweeping statements regarding the tent services, which were, in this gentleman's opinion, mere claptrap and excitement with the view of cheaply earning popularity. His personalities were likewise in bad taste and offensive, and the whole incident would be unworthy of notice were it not our privilege and pleasure to state that the most generous and successful support during the summer revival was rendered by members of the Methodist denomination.

The Rev. William Lloyd, of the Washington Square M. E. Church, occupied the platform no less than six times and delivered practical and powerful sermons to crowded congregations. The conversions were numerous, and selected discourses will be found *in extenso* in this volume. The Rev. Wm. P. Abbott, of the Forty-first street M. E. Church, preached in the tent on the 30th of June, selecting as his subject the old, well-worn, but ever-touching parable of the Prodigal Son, and the Holy Spirit carried the message home to the hearts of several wanderers from a Father's love, and one young man who was converted on this occasion is now working in the Lord's vineyard.

The Rev. Joseph Odell, late of England, now pastor of the Park Avenue Methodist Church, Brooklyn, spoke on five evenings during the month of August to average attendances of 1,400 persons, and his sermons preached on the 11th and 18th of that month will be found elsewhere. His discourses were very helpful to Christians, and many souls were awarded him by the Lord for his labors.

On the 16th of August the Rev. Geo. Lamb, president of the Primitive Methodist Conference of England, preached from the text, "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews vii. 25). Mr. Lamb said he could say with the angels, "Behold! I bring to you glad tidings of great joy," and especially to sinners did he wish to address himself. Jesus Christ in all His holy purity had sacrificed Himself for all mankind, and He was willing to save sinners at all times. He was interceding with the Father and saying, "Spare them a little longer, and they shall be brought into the fold. I will pro-

vide a Gospel text, and send my servants to preach My Word." The living water of life is present with us, blessed be God, and the vilest might plunge in:

In my hands no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

Mr. Lamb was supported by the Rev. W. Bee, (Toronto, Canada); Rev. Dr. Armitage, (who learnedly expounded the vii. chapter of Hebrews); Revs. G. Buchanan, W. S. Rainsford and other clergymen, and the entire service was one of enjoyment and power, notwithstanding the heat was intense. Fully 1,500 persons were present. In addition to those already mentioned, the Revs. G. E. Reed and John Parker, pastors of Methodist churches in Brooklyn, delivered sermons in connection with the tent services, and we have thus shown how hearty was the support received from this denomination in the Lord's cause.

The Rev. Wm. S. Rainsford, B.A. (of Cambridge University, England) came to the United States in June last, on evangelical work, and commenced his labors in the Gospel Tent, on Sunday, the 2d of July, and his sermon on that occasion is fully reported. He preached his farewell address on the 8th of October, having, in the meantime, occupied the attention of the tent congregations on forty-five evenings. From fifty to sixty thousand people heard the able speaking of this young clergyman of the Church of England, and his popularity and success were unquestionable. Mr. Henry Varley, in a letter written from London to Mr. Charles Hopkins, 120 Broadway, New York, speaking of him, says: "My conviction is that the hand of the Lord is with him, and I expect to hear that his association with Dr. Tyng will prove very helpful in establishing young Christians, and further extending the Redeemer's kingdom." We content ourselves with saying, that Brother Varley's prognostications were fully verified, and refer the reader to the selected discourses of Mr. Rainsford, which we publish in this volume. His first and last sermons, with two others, are given, and if they are blessed to souls as much in the reading as in the delivery, this book will not have been issued in vain.

We must now speak of the part taken by the originator of the movement in its summer work. The tent was opened for worship on Sunday, the 11th of June, 1876, and the Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D., preached the dedicatory sermon, which will be found specially interesting, as it deals with tent worship historically. The text was very appropriate to the occasion, viz: "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." (Exodus xl., 35). The public press estimated the attendance on the first night at over 6,000 people, not more than 2,000, however, of whom were

able to take part in the service. The closing services were held on Sunday, October the 15th, and Dr. Tyng, as was proper, took the leading part in bringing to an end the eighteen weeks continuous revival. Altogether, he preached on twenty-eight occasions, and it is almost unnecessary to say he always secured large congregations. His preaching is also so well known, that nothing need be said with regard to it, beyond stating that a selection from so many discourses, all of which were excellent, was a difficult matter, but care and judgment were exercised to the end that diversity of truths might be set forth.

The Baptists were represented in the work by the Rev. J. D. Herr, of the Central Baptist Church, the Rev. H. G. Fish, D. D., of the Baptist Church, Newark, and the Rev. L. G. Barrett, of the Berean Baptist Church, and sermons by Messrs. Herr and Barrett are published. The Presbyterians also materially helped, and we give discourses delivered in the tent by the Rev. Robert Russell Booth, D.D., of the University Place Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Dana M. Walcott, of the First Presbyterian Church, Rutherford Park, New Jersey.

Among the other clergymen who took a working part in the revival may be mentioned Wm. Ormiston, D. D. (Dutch Reformed Church, New York), Reuben Jeffery, D. D. (Brooklyn), C. C. Tiffany, (Church of the Atonement), Thomas Gallaudet, (St. Ann's Free Church and Manager of the School for Deaf Mutes, New York), J. W. Bonham, (Church Evangelist), Charles F. Deems, D. D., (Church of the Strangers), R. H. McKim, (Harlem Church), George H. Hepworth, (Church of the Disciples) and very many others who assisted in the prayer meetings which succeeded the regular services. These after-meetings are of the first importance in all evangelistic work, and in this instance were mainly under the charge of the Rev. William Humpstone, Assistant Minister to Dr. Tyng, jr. They were much blessed, and it was found that from fifteen to twenty minutes was quite long enough for such meetings, and that short prayers should be the chief act of devotion.

With only one exception the importance of duly qualified ministers to address the people was recognized. The exception was on the 9th of August when Mr. John O. Bache delivered an interesting discourse on the words "And Pharoah said unto Jacob, how old art thou?" (Genesis xlvii., 8.) He said that age in the natural life was distinct from age in the spiritual. It is often found that a child who has been trained in the Sunday school or the church, possesses more growth in the knowledge of things of Jesus than the man whose hair is grey or even white; the one is growing day by day, whilst the other is dwarfing, withering, dying. In the natural life men grow when they sleep,

but in the spiritual only as they feed on God's word. The address was blessed to the salvation of souls.

In closing this chapter, it is right to say that the sermons which follow are not to be taken as representative of the ministers in their own pulpits, but simply as suited to the mixed congregations which gathered under canvas, and delivered for a special purpose, viz.: the salvation of lost sinners. Each sermon has also been contributed without regard to the other contents of this book, and each contributor is responsible only for his own sermon.

The paper on the Brooklyn Y. M. C. A. Gospel Tent is contributed by Mr. A. S. Emmons, a member of the Executive Committee, and will be found very interesting. Tne sermon which follows that chapter was delivered in connection with the Brooklyn tent revival.

Mr. Wm. P. Griffiths furnished the data for a report of the other Brooklyn tent, where much good work for the Lord was accomplished by a few earnest young men. All honor to them.

The inquiry room work of the New York tent was very im portant, and is dealt with in a separate chapter, and we shall have a few words to say as to the general result of these movements in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER II.

TENT WORSHIP.

DEDICATORY SERMON BY THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D., IN THE GOSPEL TENT, ON SUNDAY EVENING, JUNE 11, 1876.

"A cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle."—*Exod. xl.*, 34.

Tent worship is not a novelty. It is as old as the Ten Commandments. In the same interview with God when Moses received the law that since has bound all life, God showed him a miniature of the things which He would have constructed as the place of His own abiding, and the prophecy of the coming of His Son. Until this temporary rest at the foot of Sinai, the worship of Israel had been without local associations. Each man, at the beginning, was the priest of his own house; then the elder son succeeded to the office. When Aaron was chosen as the priest of the people, the family teachers and leaders yielded their appointment to him and his sons. This was the ordinance of God which was in force during the wanderings in the wilderness, and until David divided the priesthood into its twenty-four courses. The first places of worship were the groves, the open plain, or the private tent. But now, the people, having received a definite commandment from God enjoining a distinct form of worship, needed a sanctuary which might serve also as a symbol of that which was afterwards to become their common experience. The first commandment of the ten defined the God before whom they were to bow; the second of the laws forbade the false worship of Egypt from which they had been delivered; the third spoke of the spirit, and the fourth of the minimum of time to be given to worship. These composed the first table of the law, and gave national worship its earliest rules.

To meet this new condition of the religious life of Israel, God commanded the construction of a tent. It stood in the midst of the camp, and its every detail had been both divinely designed and figured. This old tabernacle was borne with reverence by Levites through all the journeys of Israel, until they entered their land of promise. It rested for a time in Shiloh, until David was moved to construct a dwelling place for the Lord of Israel. The voice of Nathan, the prophet, brought the command which restrained the psalmist king from the fulfillment of his desire: "Go and tell my servant David, thus saith the Lord, shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house, since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. * * * Now, therefore, so shalt thou say unto my servant David, thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheep cote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: * * * and when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." During his life-time, David prepared for the erection of the permanent place of worship. He laid tribute upon all the wealth of the surrounding country, and gathered the materials to which Solomon afterwards gave finished form. So long was the life of the tent of Israel. It was regarded with peculiar reverence by the people, was reserved to the priests alone, and in its inner shrine was never entered save by the High Priest, and by him only on one day of the year. Its furniture presented a series of object lessons, leading the minds of the spiritual Israel to the promise given to the fathers, of a victorious Redeemer. In the fulness of time Jesus came, the great ante-type of all these early figures.

We no longer need such a tent as Israel reverenced, for the tabernacle of God, in the person of His Son, is still with man. Ours is a day of access with boldness to the throne of grace. The very atmosphere is freighted with spiritual freedom and blessing. In memory of the work which Jesus accomplished, and of the worship which His words warrant, we set up our tent. It does not prefigure, but it preaches the truth. It answers to the old tent of Israel as an echo, whilst in the midst between the two stand the life and the work of Christ, fulfilling the demands of the old dispensation, and sending down with redoubled eloquence the voice of God in His law and love to us. That which the deed is to a contract, is our tent to the old tabernacle of the host. In the latter God

prophesied rest; in the former we receive and declare the certificate of its bestowal, through the person and the work of Jesus. If you go into the Patent Office at Washington, you will see thousands of miniature models, each representing a possible combination of power in the industry of the people. Not one of them has in itself anything of effective energy. Each teaches that which shall be; and when in the large the lines of the small are re-produced, and the suggestions of use in the model become active in that which it prefigures, the purpose of the pattern is made plain, and the inventive thought which gave it birth is justified. So stand the types of the tabernacle in reference to the work of Jesus in the flesh. So stands our tent, as a memorial of the redemption that is in Christ, to the figures of the true. Or, to take another illustration—as the type of the printer is related to the letter on the page, so does Jesus' word and redeeming life answer to the shadows which God showed Moses in the mount.

The text presents *three such types*, and over against them suggests *three corresponding truths*; and whilst we meet for memorial worship under canvas, it will be greatly good for us to recall those early symbols, and search in the Gospel for their corresponding substance.

I. First of all, let us fill our fancy with these THREE TYPES. It is not without significance that we have pitched our tent beneath the shadow of a Jewish synagogue. Within a stone's throw of the place from which I speak, the Israel of God, in its scattered, confounded condition, still worship the God of their fathers. Not knowing Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, they look in a blind and curious way for the coming of the Messiah. They have their ark and their rolls of the law, but the fire no longer smokes on their altar, and their priesthood has, by their own confession, passed away. The tabernacle and the temple have disappeared, and all of the Jewish worship that is left, is the synagogue of later appointment and use. And yet there it stands, the representative of the old dispensation, when God in sign language spoke to man. By its side we lift this tent towards heaven, as the answer of the New to the Old; that which they know in part we know in completeness; that which they desire, we possess. Him, for whose appearing their hope is scanning the horizon, we worship at every opportunity of contemplation and general communion. The types are represented for us by the synagogue, and the truths answer their challenge from the tent.

I. Of the three types contained in our text, *the tabernacle* stands as the representation of the person of God manifest in the flesh. It was the symbol of Christ Jesus dwelling in reconciled love among His people. It is so represented in various Scriptures,

of which but one construction is possible. John writes, in the first chapter, at the 14th verse: "And the word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory." The Word was none other than Jesus Christ, and His coming in the likeness of our humanity is recognized by the apostle as the fulfillment of the prophecy of the old tabernacle. In similar phrase, the apostle writes to the Hebrews, 8th chapter and 2d verse, concerning "The true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." And again in the 9th chapter and the 11th verse, he speaks of "Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;" and the glorious reappearance of the Lord Jesus as King of His redeemed people is foretold by John in Revelation, as "the tabernacle of God with men."

Beyond the mere external aspect and adaptation of the tabernacle, we are permitted by the Word of God to search for somewhat of the Christ in every detail of its appointment. It was a temporary construction, easily taken down, knowing no permanence, and as such it presented the redeeming work of Christ in its relation to His eternal kingdom. It was divided into two parts; the portion nearest the entrance was called the holy place; the enclosure beyond was known as the holiest of all. Between these two apartments hung a heavy veil of woven work. Above this veil, and between the peak of the tent and the upper line on which the veil was hung, the tabernacle was open, so that the inaccessible light, which shone above the mercy seat, brightened the outer portion of the tent. This veil is identified by the apostle, in Hebrews *x*: 20, as the flesh, the body of the Son of Man and God. The two portions presented, therefore, the two natures of the one Christ. The human and the divine had each its symbol, and yet they formed but one tabernacle. Just outside the tabernacle stood the brazen altar, upon which all the sacrifices were presented. Here, morning and evening, the lamb that was slain prophesied the Lamb of God that was to come. The worshipper, represented by the priest, (for he had no standing in the holy place himself) must pass by the blood of the altar before he could enter into the tabernacle itself. Only by His sacrifice can the person of Christ become comprehensible to the believer. It is through blood that we learn the secret things of the Son of Man. As soon as the entrance of the tabernacle had been passed, the priest, representing the people, came to the brazen laver, and then, beyond this, on either side, to the table of shew bread, and the golden candlestick, with its seven branches, whilst just before him stood the golden altar of incense, against and yet outside the veil. So faith recognizes "the washing of water by the word" (Eph. *v*: 26); the "bread of heaven," and the "light that

lighteth every man that cometh into the world," in these features of the tabernacle's furniture. The altar of incense presents the Great Advocate's office effective, because He Himself, in His humanity, was tempted like as we are. All these phrases of "cleansing," "illuminating," "sustaining," "intercession," have intimate connection with the human nature of Christ the Lord.

On the great Day of Atonement, with blood from the brazen altar, and with censer and smoking incense, the high priest solemnly entered the curtains which concealed the holiest of all, whilst the people were gathered without the tabernacle, in solemn penitence and prayer. Now did the glory of God descend, as the ark and the mercy-seat were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood. Within the sacred sanctuary God had ordered Moses to place only the ark of the covenant, surmounted by the mercy seat, and enclosing the tables of the law. The ark was the resting place of the commandments, and the mouth of the law was shut by the mercy-seat, whilst upon this union of law and love stood the golden cherubim, with outstretched wings, from Adam's day till ours symbols of reconciliation between God and man. In Christ the law has its completeness. As of the ark, so truly say we of Him, "there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone." His life and work, spotless in purity, perfect in righteousness, absolute in beneficence, are the antitype of that which was hidden behind the veil. All these are the influence of the Divine nature of Christ. These combined and collected articles of furniture presented in themselves and their relations the two-fold person in the one manifestation of the Son of God. It would not be difficult to trace through Scripture a close fulfillment between the materials used, the appearance of each, and the uses of all the parts of the tabernacle and the work of Jesus. Christ is all in the old tabernacle, and is to be all in the new tent. He is the object of all sorts of faith. He is the only one to be remembered and worshipped. The penitent presents himself before a redeeming Christ; the believer feeds upon a sustaining Christ; the joyous child of God receives comfort from an illuminating Christ; and he who has attained the highest approach to God still knows naught of His glory save as it is reflected in the face of Jesus Christ. One of our young Christians, who had been rescued from the darkness of superstition, just before her death, when, after the usage of her former people, the priest had placed a lighted candle at each end of her bed, and was about to administer the last offices of his church, waived her hand towards the candle and said: "Take that candle away; they have no need of the candle, for the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof." For her, symbols were an impertinence, in her realization of the true substance. And I

have heard of another in similar connection with the same religious community, who bitterly complained at the loss of her favorite crucifix, which she had hung upon the walls of her oratory: "O, I have lost my crucifix! I have nothing but the cross left." Blessed is the experience of that believer who, through crucifix or through cross, through altar, through laver, through candlestick, through altar of incense, through mercy-seat, through ark, through cherubim, sees Jesus only!

2. The second of the three types alluded to in the text is *the pillar of cloud* which preceded Israel in all their journeys through the wilderness. It was given on the banks of the Red Sea, and became their constant companion by day and by night, until they entered into the land of rest. The personal and providential presence of their covenant Lord was so intimately associated with this symbol, that Moses, in history, hesitates not to say (Exodus xiii: 21, 22), "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people." The same gracious privilege of the people is recorded by Nehemiah, 9th chap., 12th and 19th verses, in the Levites' prayer at the solemn fast appointed on the return of the children of Israel from their captivity in Babylon: "Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar, and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. * * * Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookedst them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go." This early type is recognized and identified by the apostle Paul in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, 10th chap. 1st verse. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." It is manifest from these Scriptures and from many others of like tenor, that the cloud taught the people the providential presence and care of their covenant God. It preceded them in every stage of their journey, and marked the place upon which the tabernacle was to be erected, and when the curtains were hung, the furniture rightly disposed, and the covering of the tent, with the badger-skins and the goat hair dyed red, was completed, then the cloud rested upon the tabernacle. So long as it quietly and mysteriously abode above the tent, the wanderings of the people were interrupted, and they were permitted to enjoy a season of temporary quiet and rest; but at the bidding of the cloud,

whether in storm or shine, in sorrow or peace, though they had but just closed the graves of those nearest to them in the flesh, they were compelled to renew their march. "If the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys." So did the people learn a life of trust. They were beckoned on toward the land of promise by this figure of the hand of God. The mystery of Providence, and its protection, were well represented in the mist of the cloud and the brightness of the fire. The assurance of such oversight and such overruling defense was a comfort to Israel, and confusion to their pursuers; for, as in the escape through the Red Sea, that which led Israel to rest brought the ruin of the hosts of Egypt. So does the providence of God work out both the weal of those who trust Him and the woe of those who oppose His law and love.

The life of the Lord Jesus Christ was not without its relation to the providence of God. Though by Him all things consisted, though upon His shoulders the government was placed, though He preserved all things by the word of His power, yet in His condescension as the tabernacle of God with men, the cloud still guided His life. It was at the enrollment which certified the passing away of the sceptre from Judah, that His parents, having been led by the pillar of cloud, returned to their tribal city, and here the days of her waiting were accomplished, and Mary the Virgin received from God a child. The escape from the anger of Herod into Egypt, and the return at the death of the persecutor to the land of Israel, were equally timed by the overruling providence of God. So through dangers of every sort, as when they sought to cast Him headlong from the rock at Nazareth, or when they strove to make Him king at Jerusalem, did Providence as the pillar of cloud guide the true tabernacle to Golgotha and into the rest that remaineth in glory. The apostle is very distinct in his confession of this fact, when he testifies of Christ to the multitude gathered at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." And now faith beholds the Christ in the heavenly places, still both God and man, preserved until at the leading of the cloud, He shall return to resume His residence and reign upon the earth that He hath redeemed by blood and shall rescue by power. Even so over the living Christ, in the progress of the Church, which is His dwelling-place, does the

cloud abide. Every particular Christian, each body of believers, and the whole company of the faithful throughout the ages, and the world, must testify to the sweetness of the leadings, the strength of the support, the deliverance from difficulties, which have been wrought by the God of the cloud. It is His hand which hath brought us to this place. We believe that we rightly interpret His will when we set up this tent. The pillar of cloud marked the resting-place for our tabernacle; and it is good for us, whilst sitting in the rest thus secured and entering into the worship thus permitted, to recall and recount the personal obligations we owe to the providence of God, and to testify of all the way which He hath led this company of His believing children through these many years. Perhaps it would be well to spend a season in silence, that each might meditate upon his own life. Such recollection of the many interpositions of God in all our lives would surely educate our simplicity and constancy of trust in His promise of power and protection through coming days. But at least, as for the time the leader of this people, I may give glory, in their name, to the God that dwelt in the cloud. Each step in the progress of the Church of the Holy Trinity, and in the development of its peculiar work has been marked by a new sign of the will of our great guiding God. From a little handfull we have become a great host. Surely goodness and mercy have followed us through all these years, and strength and wisdom have been our guides. Whilst we enter now upon a new stage of active evangelistic effort, in this memorial tent, we look for our warrant in our peculiar work, and for our defence whilst surrounded by dangers, to the cloud that covers the tent. Whilst it rests upon us, let the tabernacle stand. When it shall be removed, let the people bow to its will and follow where it leads.

3. The third type suggested in this text is *The glory of the Lord which filled the tabernacle.* Over the outstretched wings of the cherubim, which shadowed the mercy-seat upon the ark of the covenant, rested, as on the throne, the shekinah of the God of the covenant. There was no light from without, to relieve the darkness of the holiest of all. The sanctuary of God's presence was brightened only by His own indwelling, whilst over the tent shone out somewhat of the glory which in its excess of light was hidden by the veil. Only the high priest ever saw the shekinah, and he not without blood. After Moses talked with God in the mount, we read that his face did so shine that the people were afraid to look upon him. He caught somewhat of the glory in the act of communion with the covenant God. And again in Jesus' face, when on the mount of transfiguration with His chosen disciples, the glory of God shone with a brilliance above the noon-day sun. The shepherds on Bethlehem plain beheld, in the darkness of the

night, this same glory, when Christ was born, for "Lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." Always in the New Testament is the shekinah presented as connected with the person of Christ. The apostle, writing in his second epistle to the Corinthians, 4th chap. and 6th verse, declares: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And again, in the 3d chap. and 18th verse of the same epistle: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." In the three accounts of his conversion given by Saint Paul, the same statement is made of the glory which outshone the noon-day sun, and which preceded the utterance of the Lord: "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." Surely, in these latter days of privilege, taught by these many scriptures, we may look up, and, in the language of Moses' prayer, cry: "Show me thy glory!" Christian faith aspires to a more thorough knowledge of the God who crowns with His presence the mercy-seat and the law. So soon as any soul learns of God as He is in the reconciliation wrought and preached by Jesus Christ, there is to him no darkness at all. Out of despair into hope, out of doubt into assurance, out of fear into confidence, through the grace of the Lord Jesus, is he introduced as from darkness into marvellous light. O that the glory of the Lord would fill this tabernacle! Let this be our prayer, and this, in a clear exposition of His word, our purpose. If He be not here, in vain shall every teacher speak. Without Him we can do nothing. If blind eyes are to see the light, if deaf ears are to hear the joyful sound, if limping lives are to be made obedient to His example, then the great healer and helper and hope of Israel must depart not from the tabernacle.

It is not enough, dear friends, that we erect our tent as a memorial of that tabernacle which represented the person and work of Jesus our Lord. It does not suffice that the cloud of His providence rests upon us in our present work. Vain will our preparation prove, fruitless our efforts, disappointed will be our hearts, unless the glory of the Lord shall fill the tabernacle.

II. At the opening of this address I proposed for your consideration THREE TRUTHS, which corresponded to these three types, and in parallel statement I have already tried to present them by way of instruction. Like rays of light converging in one centre, the focus of all truth is the person and work of Christ. Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, we have found, and of Him our testimony must be most explicit and plain. But now that we enter upon this great work, which is to be continued

through the burden and heat of summer days, may I not turn these truths from their doctrinal statement and give them more practical form. Let no one here depreciate the difficulties which are before us. It has been held as a settled rule for many years in this community that Christian work must needs be suspended during the summer months. Many of our churches are necessarily closed, and a large portion of our population is transferred to the country districts. But the mass of the people of this great city know no such absence. The temptations to indifference and godlessness on the Sabbath day, and still more on the evenings of the week, are multiplied an hundred fold. To expect men to resist these, to renounce their unbelief, and to return obediently to their Redeemer and God, without the presence and power of the Spirit of God, is to look for an impossibility. Whilst, therefore, we do not undervalue the adverse influences which we are to encounter, we look unto the hills from whence cometh our help. Our confidence is in the condescending residence of God the Holy Ghost. We honor Him as present when we yield ourselves as co-workers in the salvation of men, and we count upon His influence as surely as upon the law of gravitation, or upon the circulation of the blood. This is our confidence, and in the name of this Lord we set up the banner of the Gospel Tent.

Taught and supported by the Spirit, let me exhort you, first, to *watch Providence.* Look to the cloud which covers the tent. An old writer has well said, that he who watches Providence will always have a Providence to watch. God does not sequester Himself from His people. It is recorded of John Baptist that, from the day of his birth until his martyrdom, at Herodias' request, "the hand of the Lord was with him." The statement is equally true in every life. But there are special assurances given to the believer, upon which he may most implicitly rely. The farmer prophecies by the look of the cloud, the character of the coming day. On all our large buildings signals predict the advancing storm. Men in all lower interests learn encouragement or prudence from things that do appear, and the Christian, taught by the Word of God, should study the things that happen, that he may know the will of Him that ruleth. It would be vain to attempt to review the remarkable illustrations in our history as His people, exhibiting the nearness and fidelity of the cloud. Sufficient is it to associate this event with the hand of God. After we had determined to erect a tabernacle for summer worship, we could find in the whole length and breadth of the city from Central Park to the Battery but three possible locations. We demanded a space of ground which, in so crowded a community, is scarcely to be found. We needed to be near the converging lines of railway, that our tabernacle might be accessible to all classes

and conditions of our citizens, and we determined, if possible, to so conduct the work that some part of the gathered results might, when the fall should come, find a permanent abiding place in local and neighboring churches. Of these three spots of ground this was our first choice; but the application was made by letter; it was impossible for us to communicate with its owner in person. The letter was accompanied with much prayer on the part of the brethren. At our daily services in the church scarcely ever have I heard in our midst more real and importunate pleading for guidance. And the Lord has answered by the cloud. We have to-day to thank Him for the way He has opened before us, and for the site He has selected for the resting-place of the tent. At the same time we couple with our thanks to Almighty God, our acknowledgments to the dear saint, who, in her age and nearness to glory, has still most generously and sympathetically entered into our plans. We have the use of these lots by the donation of our friends who have been thus influenced through grace and Providence, as long as we require them for this service, without money and without price. Surely this hath the cloud wrought. Our neighbors of the synagogue have been most cordial in the offer of every assistance within their power, and the pastors of evangelical churches within the near neighborhood of the tent have kindly consented to aid us in our work. Thus led and sustained by Providence, we shall remain for work and worship as long as the cloud covers the tent. And now, dear brethren, as we enter upon the work, cease not day nor night to pray for guidance from the God that answereth by the cloud and by fire, for strength from Him who ruleth over all, for protection in the dangers of storm and tempest, and, surrounded by the malice of unreasonable men, from Him who is able to say, Peace, be still! Perfect assurance is the key to effective effort in Christ's work. Just as that little child was comforted in the rocking boat, so are we to be kept in peace, whatsoever may be the difficulties before us. Those with her in danger asked what was the secret of her composure? and with simplicity did she answer their curious cavils by the one confession: "Father's at the helm!" The direction and the discipline of a covenant God brings to us absolute rest in our work. Look then, I say again, to the cloud, and submit to its leadings.

Exalt the work of Jesus. This is our peculiar and present work. O that His glory might fill the tent! In prayer confess, in song adore, in sermon expound the nature of Him who alone is excellent: His qualifications for the great offices which on man's behalf he assumed, the fulfillment of those offices through weariness and want and the bitterness of death, the great salvation He has accomplished by the shedding of His own blood, and the ex-

altation He has attained at the throne, to be a Prince and Saviour, and finally the glorious promise of His coming again to be the King of saints and the glory of Israel! Let not one voice in all this vast congregation be silent when the honor of Jesus is at stake. To-night I lift Him up, evidently set forth, crucified among you. The tent is without glory until His name is known and magnified. Who will accept Him as His Saviour to-night? Who will receive within the tabernacle of his body the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ? Who will begin from this good hour to cling to Him who is able to make the joys of earth and the things of time seem tawdry enough, and scatter the shades of darkness which overhang the grave, and bring life and immortality to light through His gospel. O say, some one, say of even the shekinah which rests upon the mercy-seat: It is the halo about the head of my Redeemer. He is mine and I am His. The dedication of the tent is the hour of my surrender to His service!

Have fellowship with God. One of the names given to the tabernacle of Israel, by Moses, was "The tent of the congregation." And yet we have already seen that no individual but those connected with the priestly families ever entered its precincts. How, then, was it the tent of the congregation, if the people stood without? It was doubtless so called because the meeting-place of God and the sinner, is Christ. It opened the privilege of fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Not duty, but delight, drew Joshua, that young man who departed not from the tabernacle; and it is our right under the warrant of the word of God to receive in our tabernacle, which memorializes Christ, the influences of the Father and the Holy Ghost, so full of blessing and so needful in work. Dear Christians, walk with God beneath the tent; sit in heavenly places here with Christ Jesus; stand up in the liberty wherewith He hath made you free; associate with this tent not only labor for the souls of others, but growth in the divine life, education in the things of grace and God.

And, oh, that those among us who know Him not might this night find a meeting-place between God and their souls in the person of Christ! Oh, that they might make the acquaintance of God this night, and be at peace! A friend in a distant city was much concerned in the salvation of his brother, who lived in a far-off place, and under the impulse of his desire wrote and sent a telegram containing these few words: "Dear brother, prepare to meet thy God!" Midway between the two points, that evening, there sat at his instrument in a connecting office, a young man much burdened with a sense of sin, and yet struggling to cast off the serious impressions he had received. He was

at his post of duty, receiving and forwarding the messages which came by the wire. On a sudden his ear was arrested by the click of the instrument, which conveyed to him the message that was on its way to another. He was startled and profoundly disturbed, for the words seemed to him a message coming from above, as he detected the distinctness of the sounds of the unseen messenger repeating, "Brother, prepare to meet thy God!" The exhortation intended for one had reached two. God, who doeth all things well, so used the message as to bring the telegraph operator into the peace of God, through Jesus Christ his Lord. This is what I mean by fellowship, dear sinner, with God. Meet Him you must in the last great day; meet Him you may in this most gracious hour. May God give you grace to enter this night into an eternal fellowship with Jesus your Saviour.

So we dedicate this memorial tent. May the cloud cover it, and may the glory of the Lord fill the tabernacle in which the truth as it is in Jesus shall be freely, faithfully, fully proclaimed. And oh! that each one of us might this night dedicate the tabernacle of his body, which the Lord hath showed us must shortly be put off, to the service of Him who alone can cleanse, control and consecrate it. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance of this great privilege and obligation. I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice unto the Lord, which is your reasonable service. So, as by the tabernacle of old, shall Providence, in the tent of to-day mould your lives, the shekinah brighten your influence, and Jesus the Master daily become more precious. To Him, to His work, to His praise, to His glory, world without end, let us rise and sanctify the tent, and separate ourselves.

CHAPTER III.

THE LOST SHEEP SOUGHT AND FOUND.

SERMON BY THE REV. ROBERT RUSSELL BOOTH, D.D., OF UNIVERSITY PLACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ON THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 1876.

"And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing."—*Luke xv.*, 5.

These words are taken from one of the most touching and instructive of our Saviour's parables. It was near the close of His public ministry, and a great company had assembled to hear Him. They stood around Him in two groups or circles. Close at hand were all the publicans and sinners. Needy, disreputable and self-condemned, they came to Him who had a look of kindness and a hand of help for such as they, and who had often healed the broken-hearted by a word, or sent the sighing mourner singing to his home. And more remote, but near enough to see and hear, the Scribes and Pharisees were grouped together, wondering what the man of Nazareth would say, and watching for an opportunity to criticize His teaching. Proud, self-sufficient, separate in station and in feeling from the common people, they gazed with scornful eyes upon that eager throng that pressed upon the Son of God. It was a strange and a revolting sight to them. A man professing to be sent from God standing complacently in the midst of such a company! A holy Prophet speaking kindly and compassionately to such miserable wretches! What could it mean? How could such infinite incongruity of conduct and profession be explained? "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." This was their comment on the scene before them. It was enough to condemn Christ in their eyes, that he should keep such company and be interested in their welfare. In answer to this sneer of the exclusive Pharisees, the gracious Saviour spoke three parables by which

He set before them a vindication of His conduct, and of the claims of these publicans and sinners to divine compassion. In all these parables—that of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Prodigal Son—one idea is introduced, which is the natural sentiment of tenderness and concern which is awakened in the human heart by the peril or the loss of any precious thing. In all of them man is represented as being lost, and God as a loser and a seeker because of his desire to save him. The contrast between the pride and scorn exhibited by these self-righteous Pharisees, and the long-suffering and gentleness of God towards the erring, is none the less forcibly presented, because the different scenes are set before them without comment. It was enough for Christ to tell them how God feels towards the lost. The simple statement was the sternest condemnation of their attitude.

But turning from the circumstances in which these parables originated, it is our present interest to dwell upon the truth which they present. Running, as we have seen, through all, it seems to come out in the clearest and most touching form in the expression of the text. Remember that the point to be illustrated is God's feeling towards sinners and His treatment of them when they are wandering from Him. In the reception of the Prodigal we have a picture of the welcome which awaits the lost one as he comes from the far country of a sinful life to seek the shelter of his long forsaken home. But for us to realize how God regards the sinful soul and what He does to save it, requires that we should mark the lessons taught, as in the story of the lost sheep, and by the shepherd's search to find it, and his joy when it is found. To impress these truths upon your hearts to-night, I shall ask you to consider the different points connected with the parable as they are related to the climax in the text—"When he hath found it he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing." And

First.—*Behold the picture of the lost and wandering sheep.* One of the hundred which compose a shepherd's flock has strayed away and is no longer found within the fold. Wandering in its helplessness among the dangers of the wilderness, certain to perish miserably in a little while, it comes to be an object of solicitude not merely from its own intrinsic value, but also from the perils which surround it. Now, our minds grasp at once all that is involved in the condition of the sheep thus lost, and we can readily appreciate the anxiety of the shepherd to recover it. But when we turn from the figure to the spiritual truth which it illustrates, the case is not so clear. Our lost natural condition is one of the essential themes of Christianity, and yet it is one on which it is most difficult to write or speak with wisdom and discretion. "It is so easy," in the words of another, "to misstate the case and press the charges in a form to which the conscience

makes little or no response. There is a way of vilifying human nature and depreciating all its qualities down to so low a level, that the greatness of the loss vanishes from the mind, for there remains practically very little to be saved." Now it is certain, that the words of Christ authorize no such contempt of the humanity whose lost condition He proclaims. Far be it from us to seek in any way to lessen the guilt of man's transgression or the doom which sin has brought upon him. Only let us keep continually before us the equally important truth, that there is value, priceless value, in this fallen nature, and that until the last glimmer of the day of grace has left it, it is a treasure which God longs to rescue and of which his grace can make a jewel worthy of the Saviour's crown.

But what then is the true point and meaning of this word "lost," when used in reference to man? How are we like the wandering sheep presented in this parable? The pertinence of the resemblance lies in this—that in the exercise of our self-will, we have departed from the use and joy of life for which we were created—have sought a wider range—a freedom from divine control, and by the impulse of this wrong desire are led from day to day away from our true life and rest, and onward towards the outer darkness.

The sheep is lost when it has gone outside the shepherd's fold and turns towards the wilderness, and man is lost when he rejects his portion in the love of God, and seeks his satisfaction in the transient good of earth. Through the wide universe it must be true forever, that for a spiritual being to choose to be independent of his God and King is to be lost. I do not see that there is any mitigation of the evil of this state in the fact that it originates in some far-off occurrence—in the transmission of a tendency to wander, through the ancestral ties which link each son of Adam to his sin in Eden. The fact, in personal experience, is the great point to be regarded. However brought about, we are estranged from God—have lost His favor, His covenant protection, our birth-right of eternal happiness. Whatever placed us in the road we travel, it is a road which leads us to the wilderness. The path on which we walk is one that tends straight to the outer darkness and the endless doom. Nothing less than such a peril would justify this word which Jesus uses to proclaim it. Falling from His lips, it tells us of no common woe. The saddest word we ever speak, concerning earthly interests, it is much more emphatic when it points to the danger of the soul. Like the cry that bursts forth from the prison, when men are captives doomed to death—like the dirge which rises from the sea, when the waves hurl a shattered ship upon the shore—like the wail that breaks the stillness of the night, when men are wandering helpless in the

storm—so does this warning of the tender voice of Jesus proclaim the peril of a sinful world. Though they are prisoners of hope, with space before them for repentance—though the last issue of their wandering has not yet been reached,—yet seeing how bewildered and helpless they are in themselves, and knowing the certain issue of their crime if help—Divine—is not extended, the Saviour throws the pathos of His infinite compassion into the tone which speaks the peril of the world. That precious thing—the soul of man—is lost!

Second.—We mark the fact which is presented next. *The shepherd seeks the wandering sheep.* I know of nothing in the range of speech more graphic, or better fitted to the case in hand, than the words in which Jesus brings the truth of His desire to save the lost, before these haughty Pharisees. "If he lose one of them, doth he not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?" Here in a figure is the history of redemption—from its beginning in the eternal purpose, to its fulfillment at the ascension of the Lord to glory. The shepherd's search for the lost one of his flock is the Redeemer's wonderful interposition in behalf of man. How does the shepherd seek? First of all, in counting up the flock, he misses one. It is but one among so many, and yet he values it, and is resolved to seek it. And then, turning his back upon the well-known pastures, he goes forth looking on every side for footprints, listening for the faintest cry as he pushes his way through tangled thickets and along the rocky glens, enduring willingly the weary march under the burning sun, and pressing onward as the night begins to fall. It is a toilsome search, costing him more than the mere value of the sheep, but he will find and save it if he can, because it is a member of his flock, whose name he knows and who was used to follow him in other days. Oh, brethren, what an unfolding of the love of Christ lies in this picture! To trace it fully would be too great a task this evening.

To understand it fully, or to answer all the questions which the analogy suggests, would be beyond our finite powers. Why did He care to seek at all for man's recovery? Was such a world as ours' important to Him who saw the vastness of creation, and heard the ceaseless song of heaven's worshippers? How could He leave His lofty throne and condescend to this poor province of His kingdom? How could the God-head seek and suffer in the search? How soon we go beyond our depth in the philosophy of man's redemption. A thousand questions meet us, which we must defer until we see the Heavenly Shepherd face to face, and have the intellectual power to comprehend His answers. But now it is enough to take the facts, and let them teach our wandering minds the love of God—that wondrous search of love. It

is still traceable by men. Its points of suffering are clearly marked upon the surface of the earth. In Bethlehem and Nazareth—by the Jordan and by Jacob's well, by the slopes of Hermon and the Sea of Galilee, in Bethany and in Gethsemane, in Pilate's Hall, and on the Mount of Passion—we trace the bleeding feet; we watch the patient seeker; we hear the call of one who loved us with an everlasting love. But, do you say: All that was wrought for man in his humanity; how can I realize the personal relation of that search? How can I feel that I, among so many, are missed and sought for as an individual in my wanderings? Then think of this—that all that was done by Christ for our humanity at large, was really done for every individual who shares in the ruin of the fall—and that to His infinite discernment, no single one is out of sight.

The search which Jesus carried on amid the toils and sufferings of His incarnation brought Him into direct connection with the lost estate of every son of Adam, and by providing the indispensible conditions of a rescue has made each one of us its object as truly as if each lay perishing alone out in the wilderness, and heard the Shepherd calling us by name, and saw Him struggling on His weary way to save us. Does not the voice of conscience testify this personal relation to the seeking Saviour? Can you divest yourself of the impression that Christ has a claim upon your attention and regard by the propitiation which He made for sin? and by the call which He sends forth to all the weary and the lost? And when the Holy Spirit's voice—the still small voice—is heard within you, does it not point directly to the atoning Lamb of God and bid you cast the burden of your guilt and fears on Him who bore your sins in His own body on the tree? Oh, no, my hearers, you cannot doubt that in the ministry of love Divine you have a personal concern, and that what the Saviour shepherd sought, and is still seeking, is the rescue and salvation of your soul.

Think of it, think of it! oh, ye wandering ones to-day, amid the thickets where you are hiding from the presence of the Lord, amid the toil and care for earthly trifles, which make you forgetful of the "one thing needful." Amid the strife of tongues, and the contention of the world which sounds so loud around you, there is a voice of love which calls you, oh, how tenderly!—there is an eye of pity that marks your wandering steps—there is a pierced hand that is stretched out to help you to return to God. Christ is a seeking Saviour, and if you perish it will be because you wilfully refuse His aid. Let it not be so. I entreat you to place yourself this night in the way of His approach. As you are lying torn and bleeding in the wilderness, make some motion towards His helping hand, send forth a cry of

prayer that He may be attracted to your side. Be willing to be saved by Him, and you will find Him very near and full of mercy to your soul. This brings us to the climax of the parable.

THIRD. *The shepherd finds the wandering sheep and treats it with the utmost tenderness and love.* "When he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing." Here is a picture of salvation in a single line. As we are wont to scan the separate words of telegraphic messages and seek their utmost meaning from those few signs which have been sent to convey important tidings, so here in this despatch from Jesus to our souls, we find the weightest matter compressed into a dozen words. Think for a moment what might have been expected at this point in the parable. Anger at such perverseness as the wanderer had shown, reproaches for the weary toil incurred in finding it, a rude and heavy hand laid on the sheep to draw it from the thicket, and an impatient push to start it in the homeward journey—such would have seemed the natural treatment in a case like this. Such was indeed the spirit of the Pharisees and Scribes towards all publicans and sinners—and such is the treatment which lost men instinctively expect when they first come in contact with the Gospel. But there is nothing like this in the scene presented here. The shepherd overtakes the sheep at last, but speaks no word of anger, nor does his face look a reproach for straying; he sees it lying torn and bleeding there before him, and his only thought is one of gladness that it is found at last, and of anxiety to get it safely home. And yet more—not only does he spare reproaches, but he is most compassionate toward its weakness. He takes it up with tenderness and lays it on his shoulder and bears it back along the way by which it wandered from the fold. And blending with all this, is the significance of the last word in the description, "rejoicing." "He layeth it on his shoulder, rejoicing." This joy begins when he begins to save it. The burden of it does not weary him because it was the very purpose of his search to find the sheep and bring it home in safety. Do not wonder that I dwell thus upon the details of this description, for here, if anywhere, we have a clear delineation of the delights of God the Saviour in executing toward individuals the sublime and blessed object for which He was incarnate and died upon the cross. The truth which shines upon us through this simple illustration is one which is suited to our dark, distrustful thoughts about the love of Christ to sinners. It has been said with reason, that the highest test of civilization in a state, is the way in which it deals with criminals. The tendency in all the world is to reform and save by harsh inflictions, and men instinctively shrink back from Christ, for fear that the lash may be hidden in the hand which He extends. No doubt there is an element of dis-

cipline in all His healthful dealings with the souls of men, but the great truth is, that He is a cheerful giver. He loves to save and He finds greater joy in lifting one of us and carrying our weight upon the homeward journey, than we can feel in resting it upon Him. Let your imagination work upon this picture, to whatever length you will, you will not find it possible to go beyond the grand proportions and exquisite beauty of the doctrine it contains. It is a joy to Christ to save a soul, and when He finds one willing to be saved, His treatment of it is infinitely more than motherly in its compassion, and more than regal in its generous munificence. Bring all the symbols of the finest forms of human helpfulness—a love like that of Jonathan for David, a prescience like that of David for the youthful Solomon, a liberality like that of Artaxerxes toward Queen Esther, a watchfulness like that of Paul for Timothy—what are they all compared with the welcome which the Saviour shepherd gives the sheep which He has found, and the care and patience and long suffering with which He leads it home to glory? Oh, brethren, is not this the remembered experience of our hearts as we look back to the hole of the pit from which we were taken, or to the deep waters from which we were drawn. Have we forgotten how Jesus treated us when He passed by our place of peril. Have we forgotten the incidents of our journey past, where, in so many scenes of trouble, in so many impulses of worldly passion, He tightened the everlasting arms about us, and lifted us when we were about to fall. Whatever else has disappointed our expectations, or failed us in the hour of need, the love of Christ has never failed—His patience never wearied—His pity never turned to anger—His help never been withheld, and now, to-day, in spite of all that waywardness which we confess and mourn, it is our highest joy that in this troublous world, amid the conflicts and temptations of our pilgrim life, we have a refuge in the care of such a Shepherd, and can anticipate in each event of life, that He who has promised that "He will never leave us, or forsake us," will keep His promise until the flight of time shall bring us home to heaven. Is this our faith and hope in Him? Then let these ties be fully realized, and let His love constrain us to abide in Him, and give Him praise and service while we live.

But if the experience of some thus witnesses the fullness of the redeeming love of Jesus, there are others here to-night whom He is seeking still, but who up to this hour are *lost.*

Oh, my friends, what strange infatuation keeps you in such danger, unrest and darkness when He is passing by? What reason is there to hinder you from being rescued when help is near at hand? Is the friendship of the world better than the love of God the Saviour? Are the dust heaps which you are strug-

gling for, to be compared with the immortal glory? Is life so long, is death so far away, is your own strength so firm that you can safely hide yourself from Jesus? He seeks you now; He has been seeking long, but all that He has done will not avail unless you will accept His aid. Your longing and purpose to be saved must join with His willingness to save you. He waits for this. Oh, that it might be your choice this night. There would be joy in Heaven for this; joy and thanksgiving that the seeking Saviour had once more returned, saying, "rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

CHAPTER IV.

INDECISION.

SERMON BY THE REV. WM. LLOYD, OF THE WASHINGTON SQUARE M. E. CHURCH, ON FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 1876.

"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him."—1 *Kings xviii:* 21.

"As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word."

Such was the terrible malediction which pealed like thunder from the lips of the prophet of fire upon the ears of Ahab, Israel's wicked king. Long had Ahab insulted Jehovah— his groves, the scenes of lewd idolatries; Baal's image erected, and his worship celebrated openly, while the true God was as openly defied and dishonored. Then did Elijah appear, the fearless champion of the Lord of Hosts, and uttered the words just quoted. As the prophet spake, the words were heard in Heaven, and God said, Amen! Not a word of reply does the king make, and the strange, stern man of God disappears as suddenly as he had appeared. Probably when the king returned to his palace, he would tell his infamous consort of the scene. She would rally him upon his fears, and stir him up to continued defiance of the God of Israel. As the sound of water plashing in the marble fountains in the palace yard falls upon his ear, and his eye catches the light clouds fleeing across the sky, he begins to doubt the prophet's words, and perhaps laughs at his former fears. But that night, the sun set in the west red and lurid, and its last rays flung upon the scene seemed angry and portentous. Morning broke and the heavens were clear, and the sun shone forth with more than wonted splendor. Day after day passed by, and the same

unclouded heaven spans the land; the same burning sun pours down its tropical rays. Soon the fountains dry up in the palace yard, the mountain streams cease to tumble down the rocky gorges, the earth grows so dry that huge fissures appear as though nature had opened her parched lips for thirst. For three years and six months does the terrible drought continue; the vintage dies upon the hillside, the labor of the olive fails, the cattle die upon the barren, grassless plain, gaunt famine with her greedy-eyed sister, pestilence, walks through the land, when suddenly the news is borne to the palace, "Elijah has come and calls for the king." Haughtily and unsubdued the monarch obeys the summons. "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" asks the impious king of the prophet. But that eye quails not at the stern glance of the king. "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." But he adds (as though he would say) I am not here to parley or discuss matters with you, I am here to execute a mission from the God whom I serve. "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table."

The day of assembly arrives, and now, for a moment, imagine the vast assembly gathering. The flanks of the mountain teem with the living mass. As they gather from various parts, they pitch their tents upon the slopes of the hill and wait for the great controversy. We may divide that great concourse into three classes: First.—There are the hireling priests of Baal, and those who have daringly cast off their allegiance to Jehovah, and allied themselves with idolatry, fearing less the wrath of Almighty God than the anger of an earthly despot. These are loud in their shouts of honor to Baal, and vaunt confidently of victory. 2d.—There the faithful few who, amid the darkness, have yet adhered to the Lord—who have refused to bow the knee to Baal. In them hope and fear alternate. They gather together and converse with anxious looks. Many a prayer goes up to God on behalf of Elijah; and as they see his calm and intrepid look, their faith grows strong. 3d.—And by much the more numerous class are those who are halting upon the subject, divided in opinion, hesitating upon which side to declare. With some lingering respect for the worship of their fathers, yet so swayed by self-interest, and governed by desire to be upon the popular side, and perhaps afraid of the king, they remain undecided. Elijah appears;—a deep hush falls upon the crowd;—his eye flashing like an eagle from his native Gilead, sweeps over the people, and his voice rings out the challenge like a war-trumpet: "How long

halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow *him*." Into these three classes we may divide the Christian world. Those who in some way or other are bowing the knee to Baal—who have no respect for the Lord of Hosts—who openly disobey His laws, and, by their conduct, say: "Who is the Lord that I should fear Him?" 2d.—We have those who are true worshippers of God—some of them weak in faith and may-be yet believers; others who are like Elijah (though, alas! there are few), who are arrayed boldly upon the side of holiness, and who will stand up for Jesus and His truth at all risks—men and women who dare to be singular for Christ's sake, to whom the fashions, honors, emoluments and pleasures of the world are as empty as a dream. 3d.—The great mass of the undecided halters, trimmers, hovering upon the confines of the two kingdoms of light and darkness. They are often convicted; have spells of reformation; have what an old farmer once called an occasional good streak come over them, but in love with sin; infatuatedwith the world, they wait for a more convenient season.

These three classes are represented here to-night, and my appeal is directed to the latter class. If there are any of the first class before me, who have deliberately chosen death, I have nought to say to you to-night. To the faithful believers, those to whom the triumph of Jesus is dearer than life, to you I say, brethren and sisters, *pray*; pray with an energy of faith beyond any you have hitherto put forth; lay hold of God,—the Lord is God. Victory will yet be declared on His side. Plead, then, that to-night some may be led to decision. And do you, O! ye halters between two opinions, ye who desire to have a happy death but yet live a wicked life; ye who have been convinced again and again, and have stifled those convictions, and to your pleading Saviour say, Not Yet! To the Spirit, *Not Yet!* Ye who mean to be Christians but *not yet*, in the name of Jesus I put to you the solemn question of my text, and may God send it home to your heart, "How long halt ye *between* two opinions?"

1st. Indecision in religion is "irrational."

If you were to act in matters purely secular as you act in reference to eternity, you would be regarded by your friends as almost destitute of reason. Decision of character is regarded as so important an element in worldly pursuits, that its absence is regarded as certainly productive of failure. No man can be successful as a merchant, an artist, a student, or in any sphere of life who lacks this important element. It is the backbone of life. How often do we hear it said of people, "Well, yes, he is a good fellow, he has plenty of ability, but some way he does not succeed." Why? "Well, he has no decision." If an undecided man gets up the hill of life, he must be carried up like a baby; he

does not walk up like a man. If indecision is so fatal in secular life, if a man who is constantly halting is regarded as irrational in his conduct, how much more so is it in connection with so solemn, so eternally important a subject as religion? Success in any merely secular matter is important but for a few years. The wealth of the merchant, after being gained by years of toil and labor, which have undermined his health, paralyzed his faculties, and made life almost a burden, may suddenly take to itself wings, and like a scared eagle fly away. Or if not that, in a few days, death, which neither gold nor diamonds can bribe, will step in, and all that will remain of the rich man will be a cold, stiff form, a coffin, a hearse, a grave. The garlands of the artist, and the wealth of the student may soon be laid to wither on their tombs, but the subject we press upon you stretches unto the future, reaches into eternity. Indecision here may be fatal for ever. A failure here is a failure for ever. With only a few days in which to prepare for vast eternity, with interests at stake compared with which all that encircles your secular life is but as the unreal vision of a distempered brain; with heaven or hell in the balance, "How long halt ye between two opinions?"

2d. Because of the certainty of the issues involved.

Many matters connected with our secular life are extremely uncertain, we being imperfect in knowledge and liable to error in judgment. The best conceived schemes may fail, and the man's failure, although painful, has no criminalty in it because issues arose which he could not foresee, and contingencies no decision could provide against.

But there are certain issues connected with religion involved in decision or indecision for God, which, beyond contingency are absolutely certain.

Death is certain. We do not realize this. Full of lusty life, death to most of us here seems almost a dream. Yet it is certain that it is near to every one of us, and already his dark shadow is stealing over some of your brows. John saw, amid other visions, one which makes the blood grow chill. "I looked," says he, "and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him." That pale horseman has ridden down whole nations of the past and still he sits upon his tireless steed! Sometimes the hoofs of that steed rattle down the pavements of our city streets, and as the morning breaks there is darkness in some homes. Sometimes he goes down to the water side and looks over gay faces. Hark! there is a shriek, the cold water closes again and we hear the hoofs of the pale horseman as he rides away. Through city, hamlet and town, this pale horse with his unwearied rider sweeps along. He has halted at some of your doors. You had a beautiful boy—O! how you loved

him—but one day an unseen horseman paused at your door and the form you held in your arms grew still. Soon he will smite you and me.

Death is certain. Build yourself round with precautions as you will—defy death—tell him you are healthy and that the physicians tell you there is not a trace of disease about you; launch out in speculations, pull down your barns, and build greater; go to the theatre and drive dull care away. But a breeze blows; it fans your cheeks; it is laden with fever; and in a few days the pale rider will have ridden you down.

You go to the lake or to the seaside, but he follows you there, and the waters fold themselves around you as a shroud. You go on the cars and we open the newspapers and read of an accident, a *crash*, a *cry*, and *all is over*. But if you escape all these, death is after you, and you must die. *Death is certain.* Judgment is certain. After death the judgment. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. As certainly as the sun rose and shone to-day, so certainly will the day come when it will set behind eternity. As certainly as the stars shine out in nightly splendor, looking like fixtures in the deep, blue vault, so certainly will the day come when they shall drop from their orbits like untimely figs from the tree. And as certain as is this change in the material universe, so is the day of judgment. As certainly as you now sit in this place will you have to stand before the great white throne.

Then will your future condition be fixed. Then will fall upon your ears the word "Come ye blessed," and that word shall waft you to the golden city; or, "Depart ye cursed," and that word shall hurl you from light to darkness, from life to undying death, from heaven to hell.

> "Beyond this vale of tears, there is a life above,
> "Unmeasured by the flight of years, and all that life is love.
> "There is a death whose pang outlasts the fleeting breath,
> "O! what tremendous horrors hang around the second death."

If you decide for God, that life with its tide of bliss, sweeping through unnumbered years, shall be yours. Oh! my hearers, with such tremendous issues involved, with death on your track, *judgment before your face*, "How long halt ye between two opinions?"

3d. Indecision is perilous.

Every day your opportunities for decision lessen. The prevalent argument, or rather excuse for indecision, is something like this: "Oh! there is time enough yet—I am young: there will be abundant opportunities for me to yield and get to heaven at last." O! the multitudes who have thus trifled with their opportunities until the last has presented itself, and, little thinking it was the last, they have let it slip by and thus perished.

Far be it from me to attempt to place a limit to the Divine mercy, but I believe myriads of souls have been ruined by refusing to improve their opportunities of salvation—choosing to risk all upon such a flimsy thread as is contained in these lines:

"While the lamp holds out to burn,
"The vilest sinner may return."

Oh, my hearers, I entreat you to decide now. God has said: "My spirit shall not always strive with man."

"Your days are gliding swiftly by,
Your heart though strong and brave,
Like a muffled drum is beating,
Funeral marches to the grave."

Your last offer of mercy will be made; the last ray of hope will soon fall upon your path, preparatory to bleakness and darkness forever.

Again, *every day your power to decide decreases.*

Indecision has a weakening, paralyzing effect. It is so in secular matters, and still more so in religious. Constant hesitancy, repeated rejections of Christ paralyze the soul. The habit of rejecting and repelling divine influence grows stronger, and the will to yield is correspondingly weakened. There are gray-headed sinners to-day who would give all they possess for the power to yield to God which they felt they had in earlier days.

While conducting special religious services in a city in the western part of this state, my attention was called to a man apparently past the meridian of life. I spoke to him concerning decision for God. His frame trembled with suppressed emotion. I urged him to accept Christ that night. He refused. Night after night he was present a deeply interested listener. Again and again did I beseech him to decide; but he answered, "I cannot. Years ago I wilfully rejected the Saviour, now I have no power to yield." The man was apparently spiritually paralyzed. Undecided, careless soul, would I could fitly portray your peril.

A sailor up in the rigging of a ship furling the sail while the storm cloud hangs ready to burst, and with but a moment to reach the deck, is not in a more perilous condition than you are. A man plucking a flower upon the edge of a precipice, with an avalanche crashing from its moorings overhead, is not in more deadly peril than you are. O! sinner, halt no longer, *escape for your life, decide for God.*

Lastly, indecision is delusive. No course of conduct is so stupifying to the soul as this waiting for a more convenient season. It acts upon the soul as a narcotic upon the senses. What a delusion to suppose that at any future time you will be more likely to yield to God than you are now. By this fatal delusion has Satan ruined countless souls. An old divine has called pro-

crastination " hell's recruiting officer." The coast of Cornwall in Britain is beset by sunken rocks, to strike upon which is sure destruction to ship and crew. In a past generation, a race of reckless men lived upon that coast, called wreckers. These, when the storm raged upon the sea, would build fires upon the cliffs, which the anxious storm-tossed mariner, mistaking for a friendly beacon light, steered for, and only discovered his error when the keel grated upon the jagged rock, and then the wildest efforts were in vain. See yonder ship coming in. After a weary voyage she is nearly home. The hearts within beat high with hope. Night falls. The storm clouds which have swiftly gathered break in fury, and the ship drives before the wind. Light streams over the white-tipped waves. She makes for it. But alas! it is the deadly wrecker's light. Soon the boom of the waves upon the rocks strikes upon their ears. *Breakers ahead!* peals out above the storm shriek. Hark! *She strikes*, and a cry breaks from the souls upon the parting deck, " *Too late! Too late!*"

O, my hearers, I want to bring you to a decision. If *the Lord be God, follow Him.* If *Baal, then follow him.* If you mean to respect Christ, be brave. If you mean to serve Him, be honest about it. Either reject God, or accept the mercy He offers you. Will you go from this tent to your room, and taking pen and paper write, " I, this sixteenth day of June, after being urged to decide for God, after being striven with by the Spirit, have decided I will not yield. I will live as I list, I will go through life down to death, up to the judgment, if there be one, without Christ, and will take all the consequences." *You dare not do it.*

Young man, young woman, by all that is dear to you in the past; by the memories of early days; by the memory of a mother's prayers—that mother now, it may be, a saint in glory—by all the vows made in sickness, or at the graves of your loved friends, or at the altar of God; by all your hopes of the future, if you would not die and be buried in a Christless tomb, if you have any desire to escape perdition and find a home in heaven, I entreat you; halt no longer; decide for God now.

Aged soul; let me appeal to you. An old man without Christ! O, how sad. Your hair is white and thin, and your step totters on the edge of the grave. Soon the last sand will run out of your life. Lest death should come ere the great work is done, I entreat you; *decide now.*

I close the book. May the Holy Spirit to-night echo the appeal of my text, as again I cry: " How long halt ye between two opinions?"

CHAPTER V.

SELF-CONDEMNATION.

SERMON BY THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D., ON SUNDAY, JUNE 25, 1876.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—John iii., 19.

During the past week, I received through the mail this postal card. On its back are written these words: "Dear Sir:—If Christ died for all men, how is it all men are not saved? Is the so-called gospel you preach the gospel that saves, or the gospel that leads to perdition?" This is a question that deserves and demands an intelligent answer. I pass by all the bad spirit which is couched under some of the words, and seek to-night to touch the core of this question, and to give a solution of that difficulty, which, if it has a place in one mind, may also perplex others.

That Christ Jesus died for all men, is the constant testimony of this word of God. The apostle writes to the Hebrews, "Jesus Christ tasted death for every man." To the Corinthians he declares, "Christ died for all men;" and to the Romans he is exceedingly explicit, for in the 5th chapter, and at the 6th, 7th, 8th and 10th verses, he cumulates his description of the classes for whom Christ died. Christ died for the "ungodly;" Christ died for "sinners;" "when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." "Without strength," are the persons for whom Christ died. You must prove a man not to be a man to take him out of the compass of the death of Christ. You have need to show that a man has strength of himself before you can demonstrate that he is not included in the work of Jesus Christ. You must

vindicate the godliness of a man without Christ, before you can put him beyond the long arm of the Saviour's redeeming grace. You must show that a man is naturally a friend of God, before you can cast him out from the compass of the gospel. This death of Christ is said, in the Scriptures, to have accomplished an absolute salvation. So Paul writes to Timothy: "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" and to the Thessalonians he says, in very explicit words, that the death of Christ has "delivered us from the wrath to come." Now, good friends, there is no possibility of exaggerating the freeness and the fullness of the death of Christ in relation to mankind and to the promises of God which are based upon it, and yet, the teachings of the Scriptures are equally plain in the declaration that all men are not saved. The apostle Jude, in the 13th verse, speaks of some "to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." They are not saved. In this very chapter, we have the declaration, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," and, indeed, the context of this passage is perfectly clear, when it declares, "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son."

Here are two statements that seem to be contradictory. One declares that Christ died for all men, and yet the same book testifies that all men are not saved. This text of ours is the connecting link which brings these two classes of statements into perfect harmony. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Adam, in the first chapters of the book of Genesis, is said to have been placed in the garden under probation. The terms of the probation were: "This do, this do not." He was forbidden to eat of certain fruit on pain of everlasting death, and the warning was, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In that condition Christ found this race of ours, and by His obedience to the letter of the law, and His endurance of the penalty of the law, He restored man to a new probation. Every man born into the world is not only lost through Adam, but saved through Jesus Christ. The terms of this new probation before God are now not "this do and live," but "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." This is the theology that I gather from God's word. "This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Let us suppose a very faint illustration of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done, and see whither it leads us. We are standing by the side of a river. A man has fallen into the water, has sunk twice and is

now sinking the third time. So far as all human probability and laws are concerned, the man is dead. Suddenly one on the shore plunges in, and by the sacrifice of his own life rescues the drowning man. He is brought to the bank of the river in an unconscious condition. Those who are skillful and tender apply restoratives to bring him to his full senses. A long time elapses before the man opens his eyes in wonder, and then immediately closes them again in unconsciousness. He still remains on the bank, and, after another hour has passed, he has a lucid interval of longer duration, and then he goes off into unconsciousness for the second time. By and by, through the appliances and attentions and efforts of those who are working upon him, he comes to full consciousness, and he asks what all this means? They tell him that he was in the water and was drowned. He says: "How is that? My eyes are opened and my senses are all with me." But they say: "Do you believe the fact on the testimony of those who know?" "Yes, I do; I believe that I was drowned, but how came I to be here?" They tell him, "this man plunged in and pulled you out, at the sacrifice of his own life." The man is saved, and he who gave his life for his rescue, is his saviour, even unto death. "But," the man says, "this was my greatest enemy; I will have nothing to do with the work that he has done," and so he plunges into the water again. He was saved; he is lost. He was saved, all the time he was unconscious, and the enjoyment of his salvation would have begun with his consciousness, but, as soon as he became conscious of the glorious fact of his rescue, his heart told him to rebel against the instrument which had accomplished it, and he plunged into the tide, and is again drowned. That which is here illustrated very superficially, is realized in the work of Jesus Christ. Every man and woman to whom I speak to-night, was lost, is saved, may be lost again. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Do men love darkness, or light? Do they submit, or do they rebel against Jesus Christ?

I. To show this truth more clearly, let us turn to our text, and see, first, that ALL LIGHT COMES FROM CHRIST. "Light is come into the world." Indeed, light is a key-word of the Scriptures. It is that spiritual knowledge which is not the same as the knowledge of the head. A man may be a learned philosopher, and yet be in darkness so far as all spiritual truth is concerned. There may be light in the outer court; there may be light in the holy place, and yet the holiest of all may be blank darkness. There may be every sort of knowledge, of invention, of practical wisdom in each one of you, and yet, unless this light from Christ has shone upon you, you are in darkness even until now. Spiritual

knowledge is light, and all this comes from Christ. Perhaps I speak to-night to some who are Freemasons. If I do, I can give a simple illustration of this truth, which I am sure will have force with them. To those who are not craftsmen, let me say, that in the centre of every Masonic Lodge stands an altar, and upon that altar is laid this book, with other insignia of the fraternity. This holy Bible is recognized as the Great Light of Masonry. The brethren in the Lodge sit around the room, and every face is turned toward the great light. No one is permitted to be so seated as to turn his back toward the light. All the light even there comes from the great light on the altar. The whole mystery, every confidential fact, every symbolism of Masonry is to be gathered from this great light. Even so in the fellowship of the gospel, the great light is the source of light, and that light is on the altar. He is "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and as every Mason turns his face to the great light on the altar, so does every man turn his faith for knowledge of himself and of God toward Jesus Christ on the cross. Our great light is on the altar of the cross.

All *the light that reveals sin* comes from Christ. Conscience need no longer be in doubt. The words of Christ are very clear, and no man can mistake them who reads them. The life of Christ is an illuminated copy of his words. Just as those prints which are found in the papers illustrate the text is the life of Jesus Christ related to His teaching. A man standing by the side of Christ merely and listening to His words cannot learn his defect. Sin is revealed not simply by the words, but by the manifested life of Christ. And then, if you would know what sin is in its very essence and spirit, see Christ on the cross. It seems to me that God permitted our Master to ascend the cross, not only to be the redeemer of the race, but to show every man just what sin would come to if it had full, free course. Dear friends, that heart that is sinning against God would be glad to have God out of the way. No man lives who continues in sin that would not delight in the annihilation of God. This is one meaning of the crucifixtion of Christ. We all remember the cry, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." Sin is revealed by Christ alone. The letter of the law of Sinai does not reach down far enough, because here is a man who says, "I never committed murder, I never committed adultery, I never stole." He prides himself upon not being a sinner because he is free from the letter of the law. The life of Jesus Christ is the exposition of these ten commandments. He that is angry with his brother without cause has committed murder. How do you stand now? He who indulges lustful thoughts is guilty of adultery. How does the

case stand now? He that defraudeth his brother in any manner, has stolen. How does the case stand now? Jesus Christ reveals the thought and intent of the heart, and manifests sin in its enormity and its hideousness. Modern philosophy seeks to destroy the fact of responsibility before God, and so get rid of the fact of sin, and an enlightened conscience in regard to sin. Why, if we believe that God is matter, if we believe that that book, as a material substance, is a part of God, that I am a part of God, that you are a part of God, accountability is gone, sin is gone, and with it the consciousness of sin. That is not Scripture. There are multitudes of men in this community whose whole consciences have been destroyed by false philosophy, who have lost their souls before they have died, and who have no more idea of accountability before God than the beasts that they see along the street. They have lost their minds, and have become simply automatic machines. Philosophy will do very well in the things that concern this life, but when it comes to the spiritual life of man, and the eternal destiny of the soul; when we come to square its teachings with the truth of God's word, how does it appear? Lord Bacon says that masks and mummeries and false principles look well enough in the candle-light, but they will not stand the opening of the blinds when the early morning hours have come. They will do very well during the night, but how garish they look when the true light comes in. They are very attractive and popular under the light of this world's expediency, but their enormity and falseness are shown when the first ray of the light that has come into the world shines upon them. Dr. Johnson says, somewhere, that there were men in his day who were philosophers of false theories, and who never would go to the laboratories to see experiments which exploded their fictions. That is the way with the philosophers of our day. They form theories which are very plausible, and very satisfactory to themselves, doubtless, but they do not take the pains to see the experiments that disprove them. Let them see a soul when it is being ushered into eternity with this awful load of responsibility, and then talk about a soul as being free from the control and the government of God. This is the whole cause of Christ's rejection—that men do not see the enormity of their sins. If you would know whether you are sinners, just sit down at the feet of Christ and compare the life that he led with your own, and see how you stand. I remember reading, some time ago, of a man who was in the habit of keeping a Bible in his house chained down to the floor. His friends asked him why he kept it chained down to the floor. He said: "I keep it there because I am afraid it will jump at me and condemn me." Men keep their Bibles shut out of their sight, or they turn over certain

pages very rapidly, because the light of God's truth reveals their sins.

Then, again, this light that is come into the world *manifests the love of God.* No one appreciates the blessings of this life more than we. It is illustrated on every side with tokens of God's goodness and loving kindness and patience and power, but I would like to have you point to any single fact that tells of the love of God to sinners. Who can tell you on what terms God will be reconciled to a guilty sinner. An angel can predict that if I am good, God will be good. There is no angel in heaven that can tell you that God will forgive me my sin and accept me in His righteousness. And yet, when we open to the life of this matchless man—this God manifest in the flesh—we see that the cross itself is an expression of love. The Lord says in this very chapter to Nicodemus, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." The methods that Christ adopted in presenting His great salvation, are illustrations of His love. When I go to Bethlehem and bow over the manger, I see love incarnated. When I follow the Master through Galilee, I see love working even in great weariness. When I go to Bethany and stand before the tomb of Lazarus, I see love sympathizing. When I go to Gethsemane, I see love agonizing. When I stand before the cross, I see love dying for the recovery of fallen man. Nowhere can a man so learn the love of God, as it is manifested by Christ. This is the light that is come into the world. The death of Christ is the highest possible manifestation of love. God sent His only begotten Son because He so loved the world. Where do you find a suggestion of such a love as that? Where is there a light in this world so glorious and so transcendently beautiful as this? I hesitate not to say to you that humanity is but a reflection of that light which has come to us in the love of God through Christ. The fact that you take care of the little crippled child, mother, is a testimony of the love of God which comes through Christ. The fact that the aged parent is not cast out in absolute and utter rejection, is an influence of the gospel of Christ. Every reform institution; every hospital; every house of refuge; every asylum for those who are afflicted and diseased, is only a reflection upon the human heart of some of the light which shines down from God Almighty through Jesus Christ. Human love is the reflection of divine love. I saw, not long since, in one of the galleries of the Centennial Loan Exhibition, now in our city, a painting that illustrates just this truth. It represents a martyr standing in the arena awaiting the moment of her death. Behind the barred cage are seen two or three lions, which have been sated by former martyrdom, with the blood of the victims marking the lintel of the door through which

they have been put into the den. They play with one another in the complete rest and composure of those who have been perfectly satisfied. Behind another grating stands a leopard in wild fury, waiting the moment when the bars shall be withdrawn and he shall make his jump of destruction upon this timid girl. Her face is represented as having been veiled with deep black, that she might not see the destruction so soon coming to her. From a seat above some one has cast a flower which is before her feet. She has raised her vail, and is looking up with such an expression of gratitude and devotion to the loved one above, that, for the time, entirely destroy all fear and banish all thoughts of her coming death. Love from above had made her indifferent to the misery that was awaiting her below. It seems to me that a far higher and nobler exhibition of the power of love is shown by the Lord Jesus Christ as he sends down tokens of His love through this gospel, which, if accepted and believed, robs life of its misery and teaches us of eternal refreshment and rest. Jesus Christ reveals the love of God.

Then this light that has come into the world, *opens our future destinies.* It is the glory of this gospel that it brings life and immortality to light. For the most part, human philosophy has left the future world in darkness. The infidel Hobbes, after all his scheming, theorizing and thinking, when he came to the last moments of life, declared, "I am taking a fearful leap into the dark." It was the best he could say. Even Goethe, the master of German poetry, in the last expression of his life, cried out, "Open the shutters and let in more light," for he was oppressed with darkness in the closing moments of his earthly career. There has never been a future world pictured by human philosophy or human poetry, which has not been adapted to the bodies of men. The conception of man has been that his body was to be in existence in a future state, and so certain schools of philosophy have intensified and exaggerated the pleasures of this life. This is the best conception of a future world that such philosophy has ever been able to form. Turn to the book of Revelation. Look at the wonderful pictures that it gives of the world to come. What a contrast is here presented between the two conceptions of a future world. I remember that Thomas Scott, on his dying bed, said, "This is heaven begun; I have done with darkness forever. Nothing remains but light and glory." And Luther, that good old war-horse, when he had come to the last ebbing of life, said, "God is the God from whom cometh salvation. God is the Lord by whom we escape death." With words no less doubtful than those he used in describing the eternal blessedness, did our gracious Master speak of the terrors of the bottomless pit. No godless man in his senses can read the words

of Jesus in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, and doubt that there is misery before him. In the parable of the great feast to which one had come without the wedding garment, the Lord commanded him to be cast out into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. If you will allow me the illustration, this gospel of Jesus Christ is a great head-light casting illumination into the world to come. Just as the engineer steers his course and governs his speed by that which the head-light reveals in advance, so does the man who accepts the light that has come into the world, guide himself by the revelations made in this book as to his future destiny. This light that has come into the world reveals sin, manifests the love of God, and opens the future destiny of souls.

II. Will you bear with me whilst I tell you that, from this text, we learn that ALL SHADOWS ARE OF HUMAN CHOICE. At noon time, the sun is right over us, the sun casts no shadows, neither on the face nor on the figure. It is the privilege of every living man this night to stand in this world as in the noon-tide of the Sun of Righteousness and engage in his daily avocations without a single shadow either on his conscience, his character or his career. As there is all light in the world at noon time, so is there all light in the gospel to which we are invited. The daylight of the soul in this world is its turning away from sin, the night of the soul is its turning away from Jesus Christ. If we abide in the light, we shall be kept in the light; if we turn away from the light, we shall be kept in shadow. I do not say that there are not times in every Christian's life when dark shadows do not flit over the soul, but they do not obscure the great light. They are permitted by God for the accomplishment of some glorious purpose that He does not yet reveal, but so far as our privilege under this gospel is concerned, just where Jesus Christ left His eleven disciples, may we ever stand. On the top of Mount Olivet He prayed over them, and plead with the Father for their sake. In the full enjoyment of His love and care and solicitude, Christ left His Church, and there it is our privilege to stand to-day.

And yet, to all this men about me are absolutely indifferent. They love darkness rather than light. They prefer *ignorance to knowledge*, like those we see, as we walk down the street, closing their shutters when the morning sun shines on their side of the house. The light brings heat, and they don't want the heat, and so they shut out the light. The gospel of God not only brings information and knowledge, but power, and because men do not want to submit to power, they prefer to remain in the darkness which it reproves. They prefer to be in uncertainty rather than to yield themselves to God. What a choice is this. Into

what absurdities, into what impossibilities are men led who shun the glorious light of the gospel of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. The most credulous men in this community are the men who reject Jesus Christ. They believe in more miracles than ten of such Bibles as this would contain. God pity the men that prefer the darkness of ignorance to the knowledge of God's truth. They are never at home except in the darkness. They are like owls, that hide in the darkness and cannot bear the light. They hide in the recesses and are always hooting at this dreadful light because it is contrary to their nature, and they will not submit themselves to its power.

Men love *hatred rather than holiness.* This is the declaration of our Lord. The gospel comes to them appealing to their hearts and intellect and consciences, and yet they reject it. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh." I read the other day of a man who was coming to the cross by the way of the Lord's Prayer, and he began to say, "Our Father who art in Heaven," and continued on until he came to the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," and he said, "No, I cannot say that." Then you will have to remain in darkness; if you cannot forgive your brother man, you never can come into fellowship with God. It is a fundamental fact of His gospel. That man preferred hatred to holiness. It was only the other day I was talking to a young man who tried to persuade me that he could be a Christian and yet distribute the chips in a gambling hell, ready to sell his soul for the mere purposes of gain. Men complain against the gospel because they hate that which it commands. All down our streets to-day gin shops have had their back doors open. I stood near one and saw several men come out of one of these hells. They were filled with those who were seeking the gratification of their appetites. What were they? So many escapes from the effect of the sacred influences of a quiet Sabbath. Do you suppose every man who went in there was thirsty? I tell you nay. The associations of the day and the restrictions of the law were so burdensome that whatever love of sin and hatred against God and holiness was in their hearts they took with them, and gave expression to them in these places, which are so many entrances to hell. Men try to get out of the light of the gospel into these refuges of sin and vice.

Then there are men who prefer *doubt to assurance.* They are always in dread and darkness. They never say "I know whom I believe." "Do you doubt whether you are a Christian?" "I hope I am." They are always downcast and despairing. They are always dubious of their standing before God. There should be no doubtful Christians. The gospel of Jesus Christ brings us into

absolute security and sonship with Him. You can be as secure to-night as after the judgment day, for your security is in Christ. If Christ lives you shall live. If you are related to Him, then your life is everlasting.

III. There is one other point to which I will call your attention, and then I will close. ALL CONDEMNATION IS SELF-WROUGHT. Our Lord emphasizes this truth when he says, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." The gospel comes to us with its sweet message of reconciliation to God and eternal life through Jesus Christ His only begotten Son; but men reject this light, which has come into the world, because their deeds are evil.

It is their own fault which insulates them. I have a district telegraph instrument in my house. It is ready to call a messenger, or to summon the fire engine or the policeman, but if I cut the wire I destroy all communication. The instrument is there perfect in all its parts, but I have cut the connection; I have insulated myself. If a man says, "I will have none of Christ; I will not have Him as my Saviour," it is his own unbelief which leads him to reject Christ. He makes it impossible for Almighty God to save him as long as he remains a free agent. If he were a machine, God could control him. So long as he is a man with a conscience, he can be saved in no other way than by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—by believing the testimony and resting on the word.

Then there are some who are guilty not only of unbelief, but of blasphemy. I want to say to these men that God is a prayer-hearing God. Every man who swears prays, and just as certain as God is a prayer-answering God, every oath that has been uttered by the blaspheming lips of men, will come down upon them in the day of God's account. If you ask Him to send your soul to hell, He will keep you to your word. If you pray God to damn your soul, He will hold you to your prayer. Let no man think that blasphemy is a sin that will not be punished, and that when he blasphemes he is doing no harm. God will answer his petition. If you are condemned at the last day it will be your own fault.

When you stand on a precipice and reach over to pluck the flower that is just a little beyond your line of balance, it is your own fault if you go over. God have pity upon men who are going downward at such a speed that no influence short of omnipotence can arrest them. All about us are men that are tempting hell. God must interpose with His outstretched arm in some marvellous way to keep them from the bottomless pit. You might as well say that if you take poison into your mouth, or if by your own vice you contract some loathsome and incurable

disease, it is God's fault if you die, as to say that it is God's fault, or the defect of this great salvation, if you are lost by reason of your godless life. God have pity upon men that have no pity for themselves. You will be compelled to confess at the last day that you alone are to blame, and that it is not a defect in the gospel of Christ. It is not the insufficiency of the redemption of Christ. It is not the withholding of the Holy Spirit. It is your own unbelief and hardness of heart. Oh, turn not away from this great salvation. Live in the light of this glorious gospel which teaches you that your sins are forgiven through the blood of the Crucified One. Reflect this light in all your relations with your fellow men, loving them and ministering to them for Christ's sake. So shall you have joy and peace in this world, and be saved with an everlasting salvation.

CHAPTER VI.

FAITH.

SERMON BY THE REV. C. C. TIFFANY, OF THE CHURCH OF THE ATONEMENT, ON MONDAY, JUNE 26TH, 1876.

"And He said unto her, Daughter, be of good cheer: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."—*Luke viii.* 48.

There is, perhaps, no doctrine of religion more talked about than faith, nor one about which vaguer notions are held. We discuss its power, its effect upon justification, its connection with our religious growth—talk *about* its *relations* in every direction—and are still often sorely puzzled to explain to others or define to ourselves *what it is.* Many regard it as a most mysterious subject, while others, who tell us it is a most simple one, rather perplex than instruct us by their definitions. Yet it is well worthy of consideration. We are said to be saved by faith, to be justified by faith, to have the victory by faith, and as it is so interwoven with all our spiritual life, its origin, its guide, its final victory, we may be sure it is a subject not incomprehensible; but one which we may grasp, if we but reach in the right direction.

The example contained in the text furnishes us with an apt illustration from which to learn. As the end which our Lord came on earth to accomplish was the cure of a sinful race, the regeneration and the restoration of men's souls, so the whole course of His life typified this its great end; in that He went about doing good—healing the sick and raising the dead. But though the physical cure was but the type of the higher cure He came to work in man, the same means are prescribed for the attainment of each. While faith is to work the cure of our spiritual maladies, it is no less enjoined as the essential

requisite for the miracles of healing. If we then observe what it includes in the one case, we shall learn what it requires in the other and higher one.

The person of whom the words in the text are spoken was, as we read in a few verses previous, "a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, who came behind Jesus, and touched the border of His garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched." Yet she was told by our Lord that her faith had made her whole. What was there in her conduct that exhibited faith?

I. First, there was a *complete renunciation of herself.*

It was no mere fortuitous touch by which she was healed. It was a deliberate act, one considered and determined upon; and it was determined upon because she had given up all hope of curing herself, or of being cured by any mere human aid. She had been diseased twelve years; had spent all her living upon physicians; neither could be healed of any. This then was the first step she took—to give up all hope in herself and her resources; and this too is the first step to be taken by those who seek a cure of their sinfulness. There is indeed a something which goes before this, antecedent in her case, and ours, viz: that we *acknowledge ourselves diseased.* We shall never seek for a cure unless we believe a cure is necessary, and this is one reason why, to many, the whole subject of faith is so obscure. They really feel no need of it, and therefore cannot understand what it is. But we need not dwell upon this at the present time, for though this acknowledgement of our need of faith presupposes its exercise, it forms no part of faith, but is only its necessary precursor.

But it is a part, and an essential part, of faith, on finding ourselves diseased, that we *renounce all hope of working our own cure,* or of having that cure wrought by others like ourselves. It is true that this is but a negative part of the process, but it is an active part. As self-denial necessarily precedes the taking up of the Cross, so self-distrust must go before trust in another, and is an essential part of the process. It is a part, too, which is most difficult to attain. We are not ready to distrust ourselves; we cling as long as we can to what is about us and like ourselves. We spend all that we have upon physicians of our own kind and choosing, and until we have tried them all we are not willing to be convinced that they are vain. We fly to sensuous pleasure and try to drown out our sense of danger; imagining, like the ostrich, who, burying her head in the sand, thinks she shall escape notice because she cannot see her pursuers, that we can restore our souls by forgetting them. Or else we seek intellectual pursuits, or delight in nature and in art to cure the moral evil, and only when

at last we experience the vanity of all this, do we begin to distrust ourselves.

It was just so in the history of the world. Mankind had to be prepared for the coming of the Great Physician. The highest intellectual cultivation, the noblest codes of law, the most enchanting beauties of art had to be tried, and had to show their insufficiency before the fullness of time arrived when Christ should come for the healing of the nations. Without this preparation His coming would have been well nigh in vain. He would not have been recognized as the desire of all nations had not all that they could do been done to satisfy their longings, and been done in vain. In the sense of their own insufficiency we alone find the explanation of those expectations of some great hero or prophet of which the ancient historians speak, and to which the coming of the wise men from the East bears witness. The creation had groaned and travailed in pain until then. It had tried its utmost resources—had tried them fairly. They had proved incompetent. They could amuse but they could not cure. When the world had attained its highest elevation ; when its art, its commerce, its laws, its literature were in their meridian splendor, the disease raged more fearfully than ever. It could not be concealed—man sank impotent before it, and awaited the coming of one higher than he.

The history of mankind is repeated in each one of us. We must feel our own insufficiency before we learn to trust another. Is it not true of those of you who have believed from the heart, that this self-distrust was your first great obstacle? And of those who have not yet had this faith I would ask, is not your great difficulty this, that you are trusting in yourselves, that you do lean on some worldly support, and though you may know you are sick and need a physician, you yet believe that this world will in some way offer the needed medicine? Oh! let the experience of mankind teach you the folly of such a course—the delusiveness of such hopes. Learn of the poor woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, and spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any.

But though the dawnings of faith may be seen in the renunciation of ourselves, there is yet needed a further progress before the Sun of Righteousness can rise with healing in His wings. The poor woman did not stop with mere distrust of herself. If she had, despair would only have deepened her disease instead of removing it. She went further, she added to her self-distrust a trust in Christ. She believed that *He could heal* her. "She said, if I may but touch His clothes I shall be whole." And this is what we must do if our souls are to be healed.

II. *We must add* to our self-distrust *a trust in Christ.* We must earnestly believe that He can heal us. This is the positive and aggressive element in faith. The faith is an activity of our being, and is no mere acquiescence of the soul in what is propounded to it.

This saving faith must be a *faith in Christ as the Saviour from sin.* How often do persons perplex themselves over the nature of the faith they must exercise. They take the injunction —"believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"—as the truth, but then are troubled to know what believing on Him is. Whatever else it may be, this much is true—that it is to believe on Him as the *Saviour.* Of what use would it have been to the poor woman to have acknowledged Christ as the Messiah, if she had not believed the Messiah to be the healer of His people. To have believed on Him as a great teacher might have taught her to respect Him. To have believed on Him as the anointed one who should arise to deliver her people from the Roman yoke, might have awakened an awe and reverence for Him; but would she ever have been healed if she had not believed on Him as one competent to cure her disease? It is so with us sinful men. We must believe on Christ as one who can save us from sin. It is true that this view involves others. To believe on Christ as one who can save from sin, is to own Him as sinless, and it is to believe on Him as having a Divine power to condemn sin—a power to rebuke its power and to free us from its consequences. These views lead us on to still higher views—to believe in Him as the atonement for sin, and therefore, as more than man—as, indeed, He is declared to be, and as He must be if He have power to save us, as the incarnate Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God. I have drawn out these views to show that I do not place any light value on Christ when I say that a saving faith is a faith in Him as the Saviour from sin; for all those high views of His character and His person are involved in this idea. Yet when we are seeking for a physician for our souls, it is not immediately on these high prerogatives that we fix our gaze, but on that which all these enable Him to be, on Him as the one who hath power on earth to forgive sins. Here then is the point on which we are to fix our faith, and the belief we have in Him must be such as shall enable us to say, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." To a belief in His power must also be added a belief in His willingness to save us, a trust in Him, a full confidence that He who can will give rest to those who rely upon Him. A belief in His mercy and love is necessarily included in saving faith, for otherwise we never could draw near to Him. Nor is this any lowering of His divine holiness nor a mote in the blaze of His resplendent purity. It is not to make Him a disregarder of moral distinctions,

or to weaken His hatred of sin in itself. For the very fact of His ability and willingness to forgive sin is founded upon His freedom from it and His suffering for its sake. Thus it is that saving faith is faith in a Saviour from sin.

But the faith which made the woman whole was more than this. It included so great a desire to be saved, as brought her to Christ, and thus we learn—

III. That we must so earnestly desire to be saved that we shall *come to the Saviour*. The belief that Christ can and will save us will never work our cure, unless we so long for salvation as to come to Him. And there must be a hearty desire. For there are always obstacles enough to keep us off from Him. The poor woman found it so. There was a crowd around and she could not approach Him. But she pressed through the crowd, determined to touch at least the hem of His garment; this vehement desire was the final point in her struggle. Had she contented herself with a belief in His power and willingness to cure her, she never would have been cured. It was only by coming to Him, by overcoming the difficulties between her and Him that she was freed from her disease. And here is the lesson for us: It is not only a general belief in Christ as a Saviour which is to save us, but it is such *a faith as brings us to Him*. Only from connection with Him comes the cure, only as we take Him to our hearts does the virtue go out of Him which heals us. And yet how truly is the experience of the poor woman the experience of us all, that obstacles arise when we would go to our Saviour to be saved. We approach with trembling, and would fain wait till this or that object disappear. Yet we must press through them. Our business so important, we cry, must be attended to, and if Christ is so able and so willing to save, may He not save when this is over and no obstacle intervenes between us and Him? But when shall the time come? When will there not be something to engage our attention, or some obstacle which we may stumble at, if we do not resolve that *nothing shall keep us from Him*. Let us learn from this sick woman who, weakened by long disease, shrinking because of the crowd, yet pressed forward and grasped after Him until she touched His robe. Let us not wait or delay, but like her, press through whatever opposes us now, and observe this also that we press through these difficulties *to* Christ. The crowd which surrounded our Lord, was in part at least composed of His disciples. But the woman did not apply to them or seek for mediators between herself and her Lord When seeking Him, they were obstacles to her, and even through them she must pass to reach her Lord. Peter was there, and would explain away the cure which he had not noticed; as even in our day, there are those who claim direct

descent from him and hold his keys, who share his spirit, and would deny a cure they have not witnessed and have not helped. But never must we let even the holiest disciples, or the most elevated in the Christian Church intervene between us and our Lord. To Him we must go, He alone has the words of eternal life. Our faith in Him must be such that none other can suffice us. It is only in His presence and by contact with Him, by a personal union between Him and our soul, that this virtue is imparted to us. It is *not*, it *is* not what man can do for us, even in leading us to Christ, which can cleanse us. Parents may dedicate us to God. The church may receive us to its bosom. Our brows may be sprinkled with baptismal dew, and we may partake of the food from the Lord's table, but unless our hearts be joined to Christ, unless, leaving father and mother, we present ourselves to the Lord, unless we feed upon Him by faith in our hearts, the disease still rankles in our bosoms and we are not healed. But when we once approach Him how soon are we whole! We may not know much of Christ, we may have but imperfect views of His nature and His work, yet, if we only come to Him as our Saviour from sin—if, seeking Him as the curer of our souls, we but clasp the hem of His garment,—a virtue goes out of Him, the tide of corruption is stopped—such marvellous power lies in Him. It would seem that He could not help curing—that before Him sin must flee not so much because He wills it, as because it is He. So that when we but catch a glimpse of Him the day dawns upon us, for "in Him is no darkness at all,—in His light we see light." What cures has His presence wrought in the history of our world. Who that has opened their heart to Him but has found joy and peace in believing. When He has passed by, the spiritually blind have called to Him and have received their sight. Men who have crippled their persons by degrading vices have fallen before Him and been made whole. Those so immersed in the noise and business of the world as to be deaf to the pleadings of their hearts, hearing His voice have caught "the sound of glory ringing in their ears," and their mouths, before dumb to any word of thankfulness, have spoken aloud His praises. For He is the Great Physician. When men have stood between Him and the people the disease has continued to rage. When the church has been interposed between Him and the soul, the power has been staid. When the sacraments have been elevated in His stead they have ceased to nourish the soul. Only as Christ has been evidently set forth by them have they proved of use. Only as Christian ministers point men to Christ and away from themselves, have they proved a blessing to mankind.

Know then, from the history of mankind as well as from the woman of whom the text speaks, that *this is saving faith, so to*

believe in Christ as our Saviour from sin that we come to Him to be cleansed. The woman of the text knew but little of Christ's general character; but this much she knew—that He could save her, and she acted on this belief. You may likewise act, though your view of Christ may be obscured by a thousand difficulties which surround Him, and the differing views of His disciples may intervene between you and your Lord, yet press through them all to Him; grasp, at least, the hem of His garment, as you may do, and the cure will commence. It is true that great controversies have been waged in the Christian Church, and the great creeds which have come down to us from the early centuries are filled with curious definitions; but their value consists only in so far as they preserve us our Saviour, and it was that Christ might be preserved as our Saviour, that men were ready to lay down their lives for their dogmas. This is why the great body of Christians have held to these views, and carefully guarded them, because they have felt that when these are removed, the grounds on which we can claim Christ as our Saviour are removed also. But never think that because you may be perplexed by such statements, you must wait until they are all explained before you approach Him. The true way to have them solved, the only sure way, is to yield your heart to Christ, for "whosoever will do His will shall know of the doctrine." When we call a physician it is not necessary that we should have a clear perception of all the qualities which fit him for his office, but only that we can trust his skill. It is when we come in contact with him and our disease is stayed by his healing art, that we learn rightly to appreciate his character. Then are we ready to acknowledge his claims and also to appreciate them. The blind man whom Christ healed, even after he had washed in the pool of Siloam and received his sight, though he praised Christ's power and acknowledged that He was of God, so that he was cast out of the synagogue, had yet but imperfect views of Him. When Christ asked him, "Believest thou on the Son of God?" he said, "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe?" But he was prepared to own the claims of one who had saved him. When Jesus said unto him, "Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He who talketh with thee," he instantly replied, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Him. It is not difficult to own a Divine power when once we have felt it.

Let not, therefore, anything come between you and your Saviour. He is *waiting* to be gracious. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him." You may not understand the quality and station of your guest, but you will not long be in doubt when once you are set down at meat with Him. And when your meal is blessed by His presence, like the disciples at Emmaus, your

eyes will be opened to know Him. You will wonder you could have doubted Him so long. Your heart will burn within you as you read the Scriptures concerning Him; and, as trembling you fall before Him, and declare why you have come to Him, to you, also, He will say, "Be of good comfort, thy faith hath healed thee; go in peace." And does some one say, Oh! that is true and good for others, but it cannot touch me, for I am too vile, too burdened, too far gone in sin. Not too far, if you have not lost the sense of it; not, if you have yet a longing which will let you seek. See how St. Paul understood this invitation to come, as he addressed his first letter to the Corinthians. In the sixth chapter of that letter he goes over a list of the worst vices of that commercial port, which was to Greece very much what New York is to the United States, and whose moral condition was not unlike that of some of our citizens; and after he had rehearsed their vices, proclaiming against them some things so shameless, that even those who do them do not mention them, he says: "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Think of that—one of the most joyful passages that was ever written—and then think what you will of yourselves, but never doubt Christ's power to save you. Whosover will, let him take the water of life freely.

"Come, humble sinner, in whose heart
A thousand thoughts revolve,
Come with your load of sins oppressed,
And make this last resolve:

I'll go to Jesus, though my sin
Hath like a mountain rose,
I'll know His courts, I'll enter in
Whatever may oppose.

Perhaps He will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer,
But if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there."

And there you cannot perish, for He hath said: Whosoever cometh unto Me I will in nowise cast out. Come.

CHAPTER VII.

VAIN EXCUSES.

SERMON BY THE REV. J. D. HERR, OF THE CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH, WEST 42D ST., N. Y. CITY, ON TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 1876.

"And they all with one consent began to make excuse."—*Luke xiv.*, 18.

It is now over eighteen centuries since Christ taught His wonderful doctrines in the temple and synagogues of Jerusalem. The truth He then uttered has been carried over land and sea, until millions multiplied have been educated therein. No such wonderful message had ever reached the listening ear of humanity, and we would suppose that all who heard would gladly receive the word, and accept salvation on the terms of the Gospel. Alas! how different has been the fact. Instead of receiving it men have rejected it, and the question frequently comes to the thoughtful mind: Why are there so few Christians, even in this land of Bible and sanctuary privileges? If at this moment the dark-winged angel of death were to enter this Gospel Tent, and take from the congregation all the careless and openly profane persons, how many of us would be left? If he would come the second time and remove in the twinkling of an eye all the backsliders, half-hearted professors, and those living at ease in Zion, how many of us would remain?

What is the cause of all this absolute and fatal neglect of duty? Has Christianity lost its power over the minds of men? "Is the arm of the Lord shortened that it cannot save, or His ear heavy that it cannot hear?" God still stretches forth His hands toward men. The fountain of mercy is yet accessible to the race, and the invitation still declares "That whosoever will may come." Why, then, are not the people saved? Simply because, with many other reasons, they are constantly making

excuses for not accepting the invitations of the gospel. Human nature is the same now as in the days of Christ. The parable before us illustrates traits of character everywhere visible among the people.

In the secret chambers of the Trinity, the gospel feast has been prepared for all men. The richest provisions in the storehouse of God have been placed on the table of redemption. A general invitation has been extended to the entire brotherhood of man, to "Come, for all things are now ready." What an expression of the Father's love is this! Is it out of the range of reason to suppose the invitation would receive an universal response from all classes and conditions of men? We would suppose the farmer would leave his plow and hasten to the feast; but no, he strangely sends the excuse that he has "bought a piece of land and must needs go and see it." He appears to be absorbed in the desire for gain. Surely the merchant will act more wisely when the news of the feast is carried to him. Alas! he, too, sends back an excuse, foolish as it is strange, "that he has bought five yoke of oxen, and he must needs go and prove them." What a lame excuse this is! Cannot he prove his oxen to-morrow and come to the supper to-night? Is supper-time a good hour of the day to try oxen? I fear the excuse is only an evasion. How sad it is that the business cares and desires for gain keep men from God. We will carry the invitation to those who are engaged in the pleasures of life, and see if they will not accept. Here is an excuse even more abrupt than the others, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." If the man had been invited to a funeral, his excuse would have been, perhaps, admissible, but he was invited to a feast—just such a ceremony as we would suppose a newly married pair would wish to be at. The excuse is absurd, and is an insult to the giver of the feast. Thus is it to-day; the traffic in farms and merchandise, together with the pleasures and relationships of earth, still keep men and women from accepting the invitations of mercy. If I were to walk down the aisles of this tent, and go to each man and woman who is yet out of Christ, and urge each one to accept the gospel invitation to-night, I would hear an excuse from each as absurd and foolish as those referred to in the parable before us. One evidence of the invalidity of all such excuses is—they do not stand the severe tests to which they are put even in this life. That man sitting on yonder chair has been excusing himself for many years, and supposing his excuses are really correct. But suppose that sickness strikes him to-night, how long will his excuses remain? and, suppose that before the morning dawns, death grapples for his heart-strings, and begins with his terrible chisel to sharpen his features for the grave, how long will he hold to his

excuses? They have all vanished, and if they will not stand the ordeal of death, think you they will stand the solemn scrutiny of God, when we are all gathered before the judgment seat of His Son?

For a short time we will examine some of the more common excuses that we meet in our approaches to the unconverted. The first one comes as a general thing from the young; they tell us that—

Religion is a gloomy thing, and they want nothing of it. They would have us believe that the form of Christianity is clothed in the weeds of mourning, and that her eyes are constantly filled with tears of sorrow. They imagine religion to be a grim spectre haunting the pathway of those who embrace its teachings, and clouding the fair sky of life even to the portals of the tomb. They conclude that all the roses in the garden of God contain hidden thorns, which will lacerate the hand of him who plucks them. What a misconception this is of the religion of Jesus Christ—it savors of the cloister, and the unholy dogmas hatched within the womb of superstition.

What is religion? It is the recognition of God as the right object of worship, love and obedience. It is that relation we have to Him as our Father, which enables us to appreciate His mercy, enjoy His confidence, and have fellowship with His Son, our Saviour; that which gives us peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The true character of God is revealed to us through His Son, and we see in that revelation a hand to help and a heart to feel for the sorrows and sufferings of men. The voice comes down through the centuries bearing the joyous tidings that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." This is a revelation of God's character, and also of His intentions toward man. A belief in Christ brings with it a conscious evidence of salvation, and the joy bells of the soul ring out the holy jubilee. To know that you are at peace with God, to feel that Jesus has forgiven all your sins, to have every chamber of the soul illumined with the Holy Ghost, and filled with the sweet aroma of God's love, certainly can be no other than a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The man struggling in the angry currents of yonder stream feels an inexpressible joy when delivered from danger. So the soul, bound in the chains of doubt and sin, leaps like a hart when brought into the light and liberty of God's dear children. No one can appreciate the rapture of the saved soul, except those who have experienced it, when it plumes its pinions of faith and says:

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done,
I am the Lord's and He is mine,
He drew me and I followed on
Charmed to confess the voice Divine."

The slave girl whose liberty was purchased by a kind-hearted man, followed him through the crowd, crying "he redeemed me! he redeemed me!" And the sinner who feels Christ has forgiven all his sins and set his soul at liberty, can do no other than weep for joy. During the war, some friends of mine were captured and thrown into southern prisons. After a long and weary confinement they were exchanged and hurried on board a vessel bound for Washington city. When they first caught sight of the Stars and Stripes they ran and embraced them, wetting them with their tears and kisses, and shouting at the top of their feeble voices, "we are free! we are free!" Yet their joy was not to be compared with the joy of those who feel they are "saved through the blood of the Crucified One." It is true many half-hearted and sickly professors would make you believe religion is both sad and gloomy. They have not allowed the perfect love of God to cast out the cold and chilling fears of unbelief from their timid souls, and when one looks upon them he can see no spiritual sunshine light up their features, or linger in the dull eyes of their faith. Their pathway has been in the underbrush growing between the pleasures of this world and the banqueting house of God's dear children, and as they have not entered upon the high festivities of a life of faith in the Son of God, they cannot express its joys to others. The King of Israel declared he would rather be "a doorkeeper in the house of his God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Solomon, his successor, quaffed every cup of earthly joy, and exclaimed, "All is vanity!" Yet of religion he says, "her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace." Many under the sound of my voice have partaken of this spiritual joy. Numerous young converts, whose eyes are yet moist with the emotions of this secret of the Almighty's love, can testify to-night

"'Tis a heaven below,
The Redeemer to know."

It is said if honesty dwell anywhere it is in the heart and on the lips of a dying man. Try religion, amid the silent sadness of the death-chamber, and you find, as John Wesley once said, "Our people die well." "The chamber where the good man meets his fate, is blest above the common walks of life—quite on the verge of heaven."

"Jesus can make a dying bed,
As soft as downy pillows are,
While on His breast we lean our head,
And breathe our life out sweetly there."

Thus the excuse is answered, and its absurdity is clearly evident. Do not, my dear young friends, allow such an excuse to keep you from God. Cast it from you as you would a viper, and let it sink into the pit of hell from whence it came.

Another excuse comes from the smooth lips of the easy-going moralist, who lives in a house with walls so transparent that he sees and examines every passer-by, and has concluded that—

Professors are no better than he is himself.

This excuse is either true or false. If true, then those to whom this excuse refers, are not living as they should before God and in the eyes of men. I am not here to extenuate any of the crimes and inconsistencies perpetrated in the name of Christianity. I hold that a professor of religion ought to be the highest type of man. The lowest form of true Christian life is better than the highest form of worldly morality.

For the men and women who profess Christ, and are living in such a way as to bring continual reproach on the church and the dear name of my Master, I have no apology.

Jesus said: "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." There are many trees in the vineyard, but the Lord of the vineyard has declared, "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Woe to the person who publicly takes on Christ, and then manifests such flagrant contradictions as to cause others to stumble by the way. Oft-times a careless professor of religion has been shorn of his spiritual locks in the ball-room, at the horse race, by the card table or in some other place of sinful amusement, and those over whom he had influence were injured in their religious natures, and lost confidence in our holy Christianity.

These are sad spots in our feasts of Christian brotherhood, and do more to injure the progress of Christ's kingdom than all the writings of the sceptical world. The eternal God sits yet upon His throne of justice, and hypocrisy will surely be punished, together with all false pretensions to Christian character. It is with feelings of sadness I make these statements, and I would it were otherwise with many who profess Christ, and yet are crucifying Him every day in the eyes of their fellow men. While these sad truths are confessed, I do rejoice there are good vines in the Master's vineyard, bearing most luscious fruit to His glory. Thousands of His hidden ones live within this populous city, and shall eventually walk with Him in white. The fact that there are counterfeits on a bank is good evidence of genuine currency. A broken or worthless bank will never have its issue counterfeited, for there would be no virtue upon which to

predicate success. While with sadness we acknowledge there are counterfeit Christains, we rejoice to know that the sacramental host of God's elect is testifying to the power and grace of Christ day by day before a gainsaying world, and the cry that professors are no better than self-righteous moralists does not and cannot reach the true believer in Christ Jesus. But, my dear sir, suppose I for one moment admit the validity of your excuse, *how will the admission benefit your individual relations to God?* If I were to admit that all the old patriarchs were hypocrites—that Noah and Abraham, and Moses and Daniel, and all the ancient worthies, were no better than the Sodomites, or other heathen nations around them; if I were to admit that the New Testament characters were no better than Herod, who slaughtered the innocents, or Pilate, who yielded to the Jewish cry of hate against Jesus; and suppose I admit that all the Christians you ever knew, including, perhaps, your own mother, who died with the name of Jesus on her lips, were all hypocrites, *tell me, in the name of eternal justice, will this save your soul, or absolve you of your moral obligations?* Remember man stands alone in his individual moral character, and by a law of God and moral necessity, every man must give an account of *himself* to God.

If you have allowed the foolish excuse that professed Christians are not any better than yourself, to keep you from Christ, you are making a mistake, which if you persist in, will prove fatal. The excuse is worthless and will not stand the solemn searchings of the judgment day. Your duty lies in your own pathway and no one can take it up for you. The issues and allotments of eternity hang upon your accepting or rejecting salvation through the Lord Jesus, and upon the actions of no other one. Remember the deepest wail in the awful dirge of the damned,will be: "We knew our duty, but we did it not."

Another excuse still obtaining credit, yet old as the false statement of Satan amid the bowers of Eden, is that—

God is too merciful to punish men.

Man in his natural and unregenerate condition is prone to form false conceptions of Jehovah's character, because he desires Him to be what his own sinful views and feelings would suggest and demand. Some, therefore, declare Him to be all mercy, while others see in Him nothing but wrath and terror. One argues, all will be saved irrespective of character or condition; another asserts, that even infants may become victims to the stern decrees of justice. I am not here to theorize upon this awful, and, to us all, most important subject, but to declare in the most emphatic words of the Lord Jesus, that "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son

shall reveal him." The only true conception of God's character must be drawn therefore from the words and the life of Jesus, who is the "brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person."

No doctrine is more clearly set forth through the wonderful revelations of Christ than God's absolute and essential holiness. It is also plainly declared that "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." This holiness can only be obtained by sheltering under the precious blood of Christ. We may not be able to estimate the blood as highly as we wish, but it is not our estimate that bringeth salvation, but the value placed upon it by the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. This, then, is not only shelter, but purity, for it cleanseth us from all sin. Thus, the plain teaching of scripture is, that God's saving mercy is only extended to man through faith in the Lord Jesus, and outside of this we can have no security from the just judgments of a sin-hating and holy God. In Christ alone is there safety. The hail of God's judgments which is destined to sweep away every false refuge and hiding-place of man, can never harm those who are in Christ Jesus. The clefted Rock is the only safe chamber for the soul when the wild, dark storm of God's anger against sin shall cover land and sea; outside will be ruin to both soul and body. *From what God has said in His holy word* we can form no other conclusion. It is most solemnly declared that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." How shall we escape, then, if we neglect so great salvation?

In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Christ lifts the mysterious vail intervening between the known and unknown worlds. We see the poor beggar, who would gladly have gathered up crumbs while upon earth, so pinching was his hunger, now seated at the festal board of the King of heaven, and the rich man tormented in the flames, with a great gulf intervening between him and happiness. That gulf is God's eternal justice, and no one can scale it either in time or eternity, except he be cleansed and purified through the atoning blood of Christ. Remember, God is of purer eyes than to overlook iniquity in angel or man, and hath declared that He will in nowise clear the guilty. *The acts of God toward sinful and impenitent men* have ever been in harmony with His declarations. See what He did when man rebelled against Him in the spring-time of the world's history. Even the imagination and thoughts of men became evil and that continually. God sent His spirit to strive with man for 120 years. He also commissioned Noah for the same length of time to itinerate through the habitable globe and warn men to

repent and turn to God. No doubt many listened to the earnest cry of the preacher and were saved; but the majority mocked the warning, and said: "Who is the Almighty that we should serve Him, and what profit is there if we pray unto Him?" The cup of iniquity was full, mercy spread her pinions and flew back into the heart of God, the fountains of the great deep mingled their unchained waters with the rolling billows issuing from the windows of heaven, until the lofty peaks of the mountain ranges of earth were hidden beneath the waters, and the majestic voice of God alone was heard above the wave, while the teeming multitudes of sinful and impenitent men dwelt in the silent and awful chambers of death.

Look again: The people dwelling in the cities of the plain had become so corrupt that their moral foulness reached the nostrils of Jehovah. Not ten righteous men are found amid the populous streets or thoroughfares, and the massive thunderbolts of God's just indignation against sin swept over the plain and buried out of sight those fated cities. Thus could I multiply the instances where God's acts corroborate His declarations, and teach you and me the madness of rejecting His mercy, or hoping for escape outside of the shelter of blood. Do not, I beg of you, allow your soul to hang its eternal destiny upon a vain and frivolous excuse. As the angel said to the hesitating Lot, so would I say to you, unconverted man, "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee; neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountains lest thou be consumed."

Another excuse to which I will refer is one common among all classes of the unconverted, and that is—

There is time enough yet.

There are two kinds of insanity. That which involves the brain and renders man incapable of consecutive thought or intelligent action, and another which implicates the moral sensibilities. The affections become so infatuated with the pleasures of the world and the allurements of sin, as to produce a spiritual condition amounting to madness. The prodigal referred to in the parable of our Lord is a striking instance of this fact, when it is said of him, that he continued in his wild career until "he came to himself." Before, he was "beside himself," his affections had become so crazed by the god of this world, as to warp his reason and judgment. This is the sad picture of men and women who are yet in the meshes of sin. The most intelligent voices of God's word are not allowed to penetrate their souls. The most fearful warnings of God's providence appear not to startle them, and in the very height of moral madness they plunge on amid the hurrying and thoughtless multitudes toward the dark night of eternal death. The issues and allotments of eternity hang upon the frail

thread of this mortal life. Heaven and hell are interested in the momentous questions of salvation, yet the pulse of an infatuated heart makes no responsive throb to the overwhelming truths, and the foolish pass on and are punished. The young man upon whom you would press the startling subject of immediate surrender to God, looks up with a careless smile, and says, "there is time enough yet." The young woman, whose silly heart is taken up with the pleasures and vanities of the world, answers your earnest pleadings by the excuse, "there is time enough yet." The old man, whose trembling frame is shaking with the dread palsy of death, turns his head at the invitations of mercy, and boldly asserts, "there is time enough yet." The man who was snatched from the very jaws of destruction by a merciful Providence, and who felt in the hour of danger the necessity of making his peace with God, now cries out after his miraculous deliverance, "there is time enough yet." Truly men and women are beside themselves upon the question of their soul's salvation. The god of this world has darkened down every window of their moral consciousness, so as to blind them to their best interests. Reason knocks at the door of their hearts and cries aloud, judgment sends forth its mandates and calls upon the will to surrender, and conscience sounds all its alarm bells. Yet still the cry comes from the sadly misguided heart, "there is time enough yet." Surely the devil has deluded them with his terrible lies in order that they may be lost. There is no more startling picture of danger than a morally unconscious sinner sleeping upon the brink of eternal destruction. The voice of God is calling this moment upon all before me who are yet unsaved, that "*now* is the accepted time; and, behold! *now* is the day of salvation."

"Hasten, sinner, to be wise,
Stay not for the morrow's sun,
Lest perdition thee arrest
Ere the morrow is begun."

A clergyman out west remarked to me, while the tears welled up in his eyes, that he would never say to any sinner again that "there was time enough yet" for them to seek salvation, for, said he, "a short time since I visited one of my parishioners, and met a lovely young lady, the daughter of the parents at whose house I was visiting, and I said to her, Mary, I am going to commence a series of meetings next Sabbath, and I want you to embrace the opportunity then offered of seeking Christ." Mary said she would think about it. But, alas! on the next Sabbath the minister stood beside the grave while they lowered the body of Mary down into its cold depths. "Over that grave," said the minister, "I solemnly promised God I would never say 'next

week,' to an unsaved man or woman, but would always cry that now is the accepted time and the day of salvation."

I remember once, while holding a series of meetings, being called to the death-bed of a young man who was suddenly smitten down without any warning. When I entered his room he said, "Do pray for me, for the doctor says I can't live half an hour." I kneeled by his bedside and earnestly besought God in his behalf. When I arose he shook his head and cried, "I fear it is too late; I fear it is too late!" I told him of the dying thief, and how a merciful Saviour extended to him His great salvation, but he answered, "I am not that dying thief, for he, perhaps, never heard of Christ before, while I have heard of Him from childhood, and have always rejected His mercy; I fear it is too late." I still pleaded with him, but the cry still came, "too late!" "If I had known," he said, "two nights ago, when I sat in your church and heard you inviting people to come to Christ, that I was so near death, I would have sought Christ then, but now it is too late!" I asked him what message I should carry to his young companions at the church. He answered, "Tell them for me to seek Christ immediately." The next day, I followed his remains to the grave, and to-night, unconverted man, the voice comes from the tomb in the western cemetery to you, and bids you to "prepare to meet your God;" for behold *now* is the accepted time; behold *now* is the day of salvation. May the Holy Spirit help you to-night to throw away every excuse, and be saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VIII.

ONE THING IS NEEDFUL.

SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM S. RAINSFORD, B.A., (OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND,) ON SUNDAY EVENING, JULY 2, 1876.

The ministry of the church of Christ is now-a-days called on to adapt its preaching to the age. I think the advice is good. So far we ought to be willing to follow it. Some two or three hundred years ago, for instance, they thought nothing of a sermon two hours or more long. I promise, in this particular at least, to suit the length of my sermon to the age to-night, and not to follow their questionable example.

But by this cry, many mean to say "*adapt the Gospel to the age;* give us something more suitable for modern ears and ideas." Here I protest, we cannot, we dare not, we will not alter one iota. As the *mere* ambassadors of Christ, who are we, that we should presume to open and change the orders entrusted to us by the King—messages of life and death? But this we can and will do, *reiterate* and *emphasize*, so long as we have health and breath and life itself—the truths that in these last days men continue to ignore. This is the only way I know of, in which a herald of the Gospel of Christ can adapt his preaching to the age.

The words I have read contain one of these, viz: "One thing is needful." Ah, it's true, as the ages roll on, the outward aspect of humanity may change much, but the inner wants of man remain the same—wants created by God, and capable only of being satisfied by Him.

In theory, most men do not question this, but in practice, the business man cries, a man *must* get on in business; the man of pleasure, I must amuse myself; and, sinking lower, some must drink and some be unclean. So earth's voices rise, while above them all, the still small voice of God is heard—*one thing is needful.*

One would have thought that common sense was enough to convince men of this truth. Death takes all others away; grasp them never so firmly, spend years in their acquisition, and

then in their enjoyment—death touches you and they are gone.

Pleasures themselves, as they fly past you, say "one thing is needful." You had a jolly day yesterday, I hear you say. I am glad to hear it—made so much money. Now, you are looking forward to another 4th of July. Suppose you see it? Why, man, as it hurries by, it seems to say, one 4th of July less—one nearer death, nearer judgment; if you have not the *one* thing needful, one 4th of July nearer hell.

Jesus says one thing is needful, and if you have not listened to the other voices repeating the truth, I want you to listen to His voice to-night. And let me lay one solemn thought before you. Jesus is in a position to judge in this matter. He has bestowed many and precious gifts on us here. With liberal hand from our very cradle, His good things He has showered on us. Life's pathway has been strewn with gifts and blessings. Yet, what does He, the giver of all gifts, say? *One* thing is needful. *Shall not the giver judge the value of the gift?*

IT IS NEEDFUL ON ACCOUNT OF WHAT IT COST—WHAT IT COST GOD. Let me enlarge on this a moment. I read our Father sendeth rain on the just and unjust. He giveth us richly all things to enjoy, but these gifts cost God (I speak with reverence) nothing. If from a bag miraculously filled and kept full of gold, I were to scatter coins among this audience this night, you might praise my liberality, but if, in order to bestow my bounty, I put myself to indiscribable pain and anguish, you would indeed prize the gift. Yet how can anyone illustrate God's self-sacrificing love. This one thing needful *cost God dear*—cost a putting forth of His *wisdom*, *power* and *love*, of which we can have no idea whatever. Cost Him what was indiscribably dear to Him. Ah, we can go no further! *Cost Him Christ.*

One thing is needful on account of what it supplies to man. All other things fail at some time, in some way, and man cannot but be conscious of the failures. What is this, that in all circumstances never fails? Is it pardon for sin? I answer no. Is it faith? Certainly not. Is it a renewed heart? No! A promise of heaven? More than that. Conversion? More than that. Eternal life? More even than that. The one thing needful includes all these as a purse holds coins within it—it is Christ. Not believing in Christ, or coming to Christ, but Christ Himself. *All He is in Himself—all He has done for us, all He is doing.* There is no antidote for the poison of sin *save* the blood of Christ; no comfort in the hour of bereavement save the thought, "my loved one is not here, he is risen since Christ is raised;" no cure for loneliness and isolation, but the Redeemer's constant presence; no victory over the fear of death but by faith in Him who has abolished it. For all these things, and many more

beside, earth or earthliness, with all the resources of pleasure, of science, or of philosophy at her disposal, can supply no remedy, no solace, and thus, strong in its adaption to the inexpressible needs and longings of the human heart, the gospel of Christ must outlive every form of scepticism.

Christ life is needful to us. Why did He live those toilsome 30 years—those years we know next to nothing about? I dare say there are some here to-night—some too, who love Jesus Christ, who could not supply a clear answer to that question. Let me answer it by asking another question. What have you been doing the last 30 years? Let me fill the end of this tent with a gigantic black-board, and now come forward, not the vile sinner, but the man of purest life here; and let the *thoughts*, *the words*, *the deeds* of his life be chalked down, not by any standard of human right and wrong, but from the standard by which we must all be tried—*God's idea of right and wrong.* Now, add to these all the thoughts he has not thought, words he has not said, deeds he has not done; let the sins of omission be added to those of commission; will the board contain the sum, think you? *That* is the reason Christ lived 30 years without one taint of sin—because I could not live a day, an hour—nay, could not draw a breath.

But there is another reason for those thirty years. The whole history of God's revelation to man is the account of a sustained effort made in many different ways to convince man of his guilt on the one hand, to give him some idea of the righteousness God demands, and must have, on the other. For this the thunders of Sinai rolled, and the law was given as witnesses to this blood which flowed in streams round Jewish altars, while priests ministered and prophets preached. But these were not enough; and so in these last days God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers, hath spoken to us by His Son. Those thirty years speak. They tell us in words so plain that misunderstanding is impossible, what God's standard of righteousness is. It is Christ. What life does God demand? Christ's, and any *righteousness less complete, any life less holy God cannot, God never, never will accept.* In plain English, unless I am as holy as Christ is holy, in God's presence I can never stand. Now with what force comes home the truth—"*One thing is needful.*" Can you lead, have you led, such a life as Christ's? Not for a moment; we are sane men here, not idiots; we know we have not, and cannot. Then if you have only your own life to present, your own righteousness to stand before God in, most certainly you will be damned. Christ's life must be thine; Christ's righteousness must be wrapped around thee. The God of all grace, the long-suffering Father, bends over thee in love,

making thee the offer now. Say, sinners, wilt thou accept "*the one thing needful?*"

But I need Christ's death as well as life. Why did He die? I cannot answer in better words, "He died the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." He took the sinner's place on earth under the wrath of *eternal justice, that the sinner might take His place in Heaven amid the glory of eternal love.* A little incident that happened some time ago illustrates this, if you will excuse its simplicity. A clergyman was speaking to the fishermen on the shore at a town in the east of England. His subject was justification, and he was trying to make plain to the men what Christ's work on the cross really was. At last he cried: "Now will one of you tell me in your own words what the Lord Jesus *did* do there?" An old salt looked up, and with the tears streaming down his weather-beaten face, said "He swapped with me." Blessed be God, the old man had grasped the glorious truth of Christ's exchange with the sinner—yes, He did *swap.* What an exchange it was. He took all our sins, so wrapping them round Himself that, as an impenetrable veil, they shut out from Him the light of God. He took them, and by the sacrifice of Himself, cast them as a mighty mill-stone into the depths of the sea—there to be not only *forgiven* but, blessed be God, *forgotten too.* He took all the blows that I might have nothing but kisses. He took all the curse that we might have nothing but blessing. He took the sinner's sin that the sinner might take His righteousness. Oh man, Christ's death, as well as Christ's life, is the one thing needful for thee.

So much for His past work. I cannot dwell long on His present work now. His interceding work—intercession for a lost world, as well as for a faulty, a forgetful, a sleeping, church.

But this living, this dying, this interceding Christ is God's gift, freely offered to you. Accept Him, and Jesus then is no longer only one who has carried out for you the plan of redemption, and is carrying on for you a constant mediation, but a living, increasing, conquering power within you, sweetly fulfilling day by day His promise: "I will live in them and move in them. I will be their God, they shall be my people,"—not only a salvation *without* you but a Saviour *within.*

Again, I say, my brother, this one thing is needful. Nothing less can satisfy you. Oh, you say I am wrong; *you are satisfied.* Nay, deep down in that heart of thine, so deep that you cannot see it, there is an empty spot—a corner unfilled—and Jesus longs to dwell there, that all the tendrils of your soul, as it were, might twine themselves round Him, that you should know no want which He cannot supply, have no care or joy apart from Him. Man, value thyself, for God values thee. *Christ is needful to me a sinner, because I, sinner as I am, am needful to*

Christ. Is not that a glorious truth? I repeat it, for it *is* God's word, the eternal God *wants me.* He speaks so plainly to me in His word I cannot pretend to misunderstand, and says: I want thy companionship. I want you near me throughout all eternity, "that in the ages to come I may show you the exceeding riches of my grace in my kindness towards you by Christ Jesus." Not amid the seraph throng, nor the myriads of an unfallen angelic host, does God seek a companion. I well remember my feelings, when, as a lad of about fourteen, I heard my dear father say one day to a stranger: "Why, my son Willie is becoming quite a companion for me." Dear friends, I tell you I felt almost twice as big—almost a man. To-night God is leaning over us, and saying to each soul: "Poor sinner, I love thee. I gave Myself for thee. I want to make thee My companion." Listen to thine eternal Father. Where is the created intelligence that dare forego such a message. Listen, and thy poor sin-shrouded heart will open and swell with new begotten love. Does he love me? then I love Him. Does *He want my* companionship? then nothing less than that companionship shall satisfy me. He is *my love, my heart, myself, my all.*

One last word as to how God gives this one thing needful. There is a sweet verse in the first chapter of James (the fifth). "He giveth to all men liberally *and upbraideth not.*" How different from men. Some, not many, give liberally once and again; others give, but somehow they never let one forget they have given, and that we are under a favor to them. So much depends on the way a thing is given, you know. I put it to you, children of God—does Jesus ever cease to give? and, in giving, does He ever upbraid? "*All sentiment*" sneers the man of the world. No, sir, it is not sentiment. Christ's giving and our receiving daily grace for daily need, is to the renewed nature as real a transaction as any you have undertaken to-day. Yes, He gives and does not upbraid in giving. You are bold enough now. You know it has not always been so. *You, too,* have had your unquiet hours; times when God's finger seemed to touch your very soul. I pray that the hand of God may raise a very earthquake in that numbed conscience of yours to-night. Ah, then you vowed, promised over and over again that you would take this God to be your God. Sickness came; forgotten promises afresh renewed, or you came to the Lord's table for the first time; you felt quite softened, or the north wind breath was suffered to invade your strong retreat. All gone now, feeling departed, vows broken, lie, lie, heaped on lie, falsehoods all entered in the book. *Yes, He doth not upbraid, for He giveth liberally and upbraideth not.*

Friends, accept to-night God's proffered gift—the one thing needful—the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

CHAPTER IX.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

4TH OF JULY ADDRESS, BY GENERAL HENRY EDWIN TREMAIN.

In obedience to the requirements of the law, there was no preaching in the Gospel Tent on the evening of the 4th of July, but Centennial thanksgiving services were held in the morning, at which upwards of 1000 persons were present. They commenced with the singing of "America," followed by prayer; after which the Declaration of Independence was read by the Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D. An original poem by Mr. Sanders, entitled "The Centennial Reunion," was spoken by the author, and after the singing of "Hold the Fort," the following address was delivered by General Henry Edwin Tremain.

ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen—Four days ago I was drafted for this platform. It is your misfortune that substitutes are not allowed. Although unprepared to do justice to the occasion, I am grateful for the kind invitation of my reverend friend who is presiding. I am here as you are, to join in the general praise and thanksgiving going up from this people throughout our land. Let me crave your indulgence in a few remarks suggested by the day.

In other and more appropriate places orators to-day will add to their own and their country's fame. To be unexpectedly entrusted with the privilege of attempting expression on this platform of the sentiments that bring together this concourse of my fellow citizens, is an honor of which an orator might feel proud. It dismays an untutored speaker. But your kind favor, sympa-

thizing looks, the time, the place, assure me that it is less the grace of the rhetorician than the language of the heart which is expected from me. I understand other speakers will follow, whose eloquence will command your attention.

The associations here are those of love—love of God; love of man. Henceforth is blended with these the love of country. Wh is untouched by this affection? I see it illumine every face. I think I hear the united pulsations of your hearts throbbing back the message, "Yes, I love my country."

To the American people this is the day of a year, the year of a century. To-day the civilized world reflects upon the century of all history; the nation of all centuries. From year to year this nation gives a passing day to the contemplation of its civic existence and material progress. But, in the language of the President of the United States, this year "seems to demand an exceptional observance." So the successor of Washington has by formal proclamation invited "the good people of the United States in addition to the usual observances with which they are accustomed to greet the return of this day, further in such manner and at such time as in their respective localities and religious associations may be most convenient, to mark its recurrence by some public, religious and devout thanksgiving to Almighty God for the blessings which have been bestowed upon us as a nation during the century of our existence, and humbly to invoke a continuance of His favor and His protection."

The sun does not shine this morning upon a citizen of the North, or of the South, of the East, or of the West, who does not rejoice in the inheritance of the glories and the benefits of the dying century. We are ending one century and beginning another. We may look back, but it is not given us to survey the future. One hundred years ago our fathers looked back, but it was not given to them to survey the future. Not only on this side of the Atlantic, but the world over, the past has been a most remarkable century. Empires, dynasties, kingdoms and republics have been made and unmade; weak nations have grown strong, and strong ones have become feeble. Rich and prosperous countries have become richer and more prosperous; while wars, pestilence and famine have been visited upon many a happy people.

The political geography of Europe has been kaleidoscopic, and all the grand and sordid motives of human action have also left their traces on the maps of Asia, Africa and the Western hemisphere. Good and great men, yea, and good and great women have lived and died and left their impress. Human thought has sought to learn the earth, the sea, and all that is therein. The heavens and the worlds beyond have been drawn

upon for man's emolument; the air, the winds, the sky, the clouds have been mapped and marshalled for man's convenience; continents have been spanned; mountains undermined; the sea commanded to whisper our thoughts; and achievements perfected by man's ingenuity, skill and science that challenge past and future centuries for a parallel. Shall we not rejoice in these gifts and indulgences of our time?

We need not settle the question whether this age is better, higher, nobler, richer and purer than its predecessors. We take it as we find it. It is *our* age.

We may feel its thorns; but we see its flowers, we gather its honey, we partake of its fruit, we are saturated with its atmosphere; our bodies are chained to its influence, and whatever be its evils, its life and benefits belong essentially to us. We live in it; we help to make it; we are responsible for it. Who has any sympathy with those social, religious, or political fretters, who are always denouncing the sad times in which they live, condemning the present, hopelessly yearning for the return of the good old days of some imaginary past, and warning their neighbors of a coming destruction?

I would not argue with you what kind of an age this has been. Most people prefer their own spectacles.

Should it be said that this is an age of peace—illustrated by Geneva, International Congress and Arbitrations, some one will reply it is an age of war; that there have been more great wars in this century than its decades, and that thrice as many great historical battles occurred in this than in the previous century.

If I said that it is an age of gold, another may reply that it is an age of *brass*. If one says it is an age of *brains*, another will assert it is an age of *muscle*. If one proclaims it is an age of *worship*, another will say it is an age of *infidelity*. If one says it is an age of art, another will claim it is an age of machinery. If one asserts it is an age of *justice*, the reply will come, it is an age of corruption. If you speak of it as an age of letters, some disappointed author will answer it is an age of *books*. If it be termed an age of learning, the response will come, it is an age of ignorance. Call it an age of *iron*, another will name it an age of straw. Say it is an age of republics, and you will be pointed to the spread of empires, the revolution of South America, and the newly-created Empress of India. It is all of no import. Agreement or disagreement; what matters it? Let one say it is an age of concord, another that it is an age of dissention; nevertheless, we will all, with one accord and one voice, unite to-day in stamping this concluding century with the everlasting title of *The American Age*. (Applause.)

Few years in this American age are more replete with inter-

est than the year 1776. It is not only famous for the immortal Declaration of Independence, just read to us; but it has witnessed man's faith and spirits sorely tried, social bonds severed, political animosities relaxed, and principles of agreement strengthened, as the magnitude of the task undertaken by the colonists was opened to their view.

When in the spring of 1776 the British withdrew from Boston, it was indeed a military success for the colonists. But the long period of comparative inactivity of our forces after the battle of Bunker Hill, while the small army was being organized, had occasioned no little restlessness among troops not trained to the habits of regular soldiers. When that army was therefore brought to New York to resist the threatened attack of Howe, it was by no means the appropriate material to cope with the well-appointed and disciplined British troops. Discontent, distrust, open and covert hostility to the plans of the continentalists, the lack of money and military resources, gave to the Congress and Washington's army a peculiar and difficult task. Illicit correspondence between the enemies within our lines and the armed forces without, was of no little injury to the cause in New York. The Mayor of the city was detected and imprisoned; and the plot to seize the *Commander-in-Chief*, and to carry him a prisoner to the British ships lying in the harbor was so thoroughly planned that one of Washington's body-guard, corrupted into the scheme, was tried and shot for his participation in the affair. In no part of the confederacy was the English party more influential than in the city of New York and its neighborhood. With the little army of scarcely eight thousand men, it was not only a difficult, but, as events proved, an impossible task to defend the city, or to operate against the forces ready to be precipitated upon it.

Confident in their own strength, and the friendly co-operation of their numerous adherents throughout the colony, the English commanders occupied Staten Island, rode their ships at ease in our bay, and took their own time to advance. Landing on Long Island, just below the Narrows, they encountered the Continental forces occupying the hills beyond Brooklyn in one of the most unequal and to the revolutionists disastrous battles of the war.

Had the victors pushed their success with that vigor which is a characteristic of modern military skill, the career of Washington might have been ended, and his little army captured or destroyed. But with the caution, fashionable in that day in military operations, and not diminished by the experience of Bunker Hill, the battle closed without a last grand vigorous assault, such as was made by the South at Gettysburg, or by the North at Winchester; and the English went into camp and made preparations for "regular approaches." The colonists were reinforced, and, to all outward

appearances, another desperate battle was at hand. But in a night the Continental army was prudently withdrawn across the river, and Long Island was in undisputed control of the enemy.

If Washington, on the night he retreated, had had one of the Fulton ferry boats of the present day, this masterly movement might not have gone down to history as one of the splendid achievements of his generalship.

Then came the serious question of holding New York City, and the effect of its possible fall upon the cause of the colonists. It has been said, "councils of war never fight;" and the two councils of his generals called by Washington in respect to the further defence of New York were no exception. The officers seem to have been nearly unanimous in the opinion that New York would have to be abandoned, and their military judgment was, in this instance, undoubtedly correct. Washington thanked Congress for reposing in his judgment, and enforced his own opinion by explaining to that body that the enemy by getting in our rear, and "by cutting off all communication with the main," would "oblige us to force a passage through them on the terms they wish, or to become prisoners in some short time, for want of necessary supplies of provisions."

The evacuation was precipitated by the landing of the British at Kipp's Bay (near Thirty-fourth street, East River). The American troops there posted fled panic-stricken, evoking from Washington, it is said, when he failed to rally them, the passionate exclamation, "Are these the men with which I am to defend America?"

The fate of the city was decided, and Putnam, in command of what is now "down town," barely escaped with his troops up the Greenwich road.

Then came that brilliant little engagement called the Battle of Harlem Plains (near the present Manhattanville), where the British were successfully fought in open field, and by which the *morale* of the American army seems to have been completely restored. It is wonderful how a little success sometimes affects the great campaign of life.

When our army withdrew in its own good time into Westchester, it was a body of men that General Howe was justly cautious in approaching. It was a sturdy band, led by spirits who knew no such word as fail. It was the nucleus of that immortal army that for five more long and bloody years followed the standards of Washington to the final surrender at Yorktown. This was the last seen of the Continental troops in this city during the war; so that in a local point of view, the year 1776 is an eventful one. We should to-day remember those who were with that little army in New York. The faithful Knowlton (killed at Harlem

Plains,) and Knox, Greene, Clinton, Leitch, Sullivan, McDougal and Hamilton, were worthy followers of their great commander.

Meanwhile, the political horizon was being cleared. The great declaration had been launched. It was not fashioned in a day; nor can it be said to be the work of one mind. It was the product of time and of events. It was not framed under whip and spur as a mere manifesto. It did not issue as the inception of a grand political movement merely to attract or to encourage adherents; nor was it the proclamation of a victorious party rejoicing at the successful conclusion of its campaign.

It is not discreditable to our conception of the great characters who participated in the struggles of that period, to regard this instrument as the embodiment of the collective determination and deliberative wisdom of the selected leaders of public opinion.

It came more than a year after Bunker Hill, and when there was every indication of a long and stubborn attempt on the part of the home Government to enforce its authority by arms.

It was not a sudden conclusion, as when a great general changes at a critical moment his plan of battle.

In 1774 the Continental Congress had voted a "Declaration of Colonial Rights," which if it did not suggest the topics certainly outlined some features of the grand declaration adopted two years later.

The same Congress prepared petitions to the King, memorials to the home Government, and to neighboring colonies, which carefully set forth the entire political situation. Every measure was most deliberately undertaken.

"Every man in this assembly," then wrote John Adams, to his wife from the Continental Congress, "is a great man, an orator, a critic, therefore every man upon every question must show his oratory, his criticism, and his political abilities. The consequence is that business is spun out to an immeasurable length." This might not be an untruthful description of a Congress of the present day.

The colonists were everywhere determined to maintain their rights, but all their official declarations breathed attachment to Great Britain and loyalty to peace and order. The repeal of the Parliamentary acts in derogation of colonial rights, and the discontinuance of military preparations were, however, firmly insisted upon.

In all the provinces the colonial authorities were as conciliatory in their addresses as they were firm and constant in their provisions for defence. But the difference between the English officers and colonial assemblies were so great, that the government of the latter were feeble. Their public affairs lacked force

and stability. The colonial assemblies *advised* the Continental Congress while the Congress *advised* the colonial assemblies. There was no competent executive authority; and in this chaotic condition of affairs, the statesmen of that day were obliged to frame new governments. Every colony thus had its own task and sought to build on its own foundation.

What then was more natural after a year or two of such experience, while the country was on the brink of a long war, with no prospect of peace, than that the new governments should embody a thorough and complete reconstruction of colonial affairs. This was indeed more convenient. True statesmanship is always practical. Thus the recommendations for independence followed in the natural order of events, and assumed formal shape in May, 1776. Congress then declared that "all the powers of government should be exerted under authority from the people of the colonies." When in June it was formally moved in the Congress that the "United Colonies are, and ought to be, free and independent States;" there was a long and important debate. Even on July first but nine colonies voted for the declaration, and by the Fourth of July, when the final vote was taken, New York alone declined to vote. The delegates of the future Empire State were prudent statesmen; and intended that when New York moved forward, there should be no power to turn her backward. (Applause.)

A few days afterward the Provisional Assembly of New York gave its instructions, and on the ninth of July the final sanction of New York was given to what then become the unanimous act of the thirteen United States.

We celebrate the Fourth, because that is the day the authoritative vote was taken, and the document itself dated. You may celebrate its unanimity on the ninth of July; and as it was not finally engrossed and completely signed until the second of August, the thoroughly patriotic will continue their celebration until the second of next month. (Laughter and applause.)

We do not celebrate then the act of a day; we commemorate a period of great events; we recall political and social emergencies, and perceive how the leading thinkers, statesmen and soldiers of that period dealt with those emergencies.

We take the Declaration of Independence as a mere exponent. It ushered a new nation among the nations. It is an epitome of the times. It was, and is and always will be a moral power in American polity. But it was not enough to run a government upon. Having a door plate does not give a man a family, a general's commission does not give him troops. The next year the "articles of confederation and perpetual union" as well as a national flag, were adopted. But it was not until ten years later

that our Constitution emerged from the ordeal that fashioned it.

This Constitution with its fifteen amendments is the great political instrument of the century. Upon it nearly twice as many States have been fashioned as originally participated in its construction. To it the statesmen of two continents have been accustomed to turn for inspiration. From it the government of every civilized country has drawn political philosophy; and to its genial and comprehensive influence and irrefragible power, a prosperous and happy people confide their security and welfare.

Perfect or imperfect, it is an inheritance of the century, and if it is not in our power to improve it before handing it to our successors, let us at least take care that it be not marred in our service. (Applause.)

Whether or not it will be harmed by the guarantee that all voters may be educated and public schools sustained, we, as citizens, may be called upon to determine. (Applause.)

So vital and extensive are the interests affected by a vote, and so unrestricted by educational or property interests has the suffrage grown, that many anxious minds distrust the future. Against the combinations of mobs, the prejudices of creeds, of ignorance, of corruption, and the evils of extreme partizanship there is no better protection than the intelligence of the citizen.

Let the word then go forth on this Centennial that your schools and colleges and academies shall be multiplied, your universities extended. Why should not also your churches be thrown open daily, and become centres of elevating influence and beneficent instruction? (Applause.) If they are useful one day in the week, they would be seven times as useful then. This may not be the highest ground to place it upon. It is a view of a citizen.

But I have already detained you too long. It is natural for a native New Yorker to take pride in New York's Centennial. It is difficult, after the success of last night's celebration, to believe that New York is only two hundred and sixty-four years old; that two hundred and fifty years ago it had but about twenty log houses, with a block house for defence, and that the whole island sold for twenty-four dollars. It must be of interest to old residents to know that this sum, at compound interest to the present time is about equal to the city debt, although it seems impossible to speak of that debt as a known quantity. (Laughter.) The difference, however, is that the price of Manhattan Island was actually paid in wampum currency, whereas it is doubtful if the city debt will ever be extinguished in any currency at all. Yet, the New Yorker is justly proud of his city. He remembers that the first post office in the United States was established here, and now you show the stranger a grand post office that will hold

the New Court House in its garret and save money by the operation. He remembers that a Colonial Congress first met in New York eleven years before the independence declaration; that the first President was inaugurated here; that the first Congress under the Constitution was here convened; and that to-day New York City is the radiating centre of activity, influence, industry and benevolence.

Morally, financially, socially and politically this community must account for this responsibility. Every man and every woman must render their share of accountability. Let it not be said at our next Centennial that New York struck boldly forward in the march of human progress for a short time, and then grew callous and fell behind—to suffer, to linger, and to die.

No, as the nation moves forward, onward, upward, let this people advance in greatness and in goodness. Not haltingly, nor yet with hand alone; nor with head alone; but with hands, with head, and with heart in the full power of your manhood and of your womanhood labor in your field.

"Brother, waste no time in hoping
For some greater work to do;
Fortune is a lazy goddess,
She will never come to you.
Go and toil in any vineyard,
Do not fear to do or dare,
If you want a field of labor
You can find it anywhere."

(Loud applause.)

A vote of thanks proposed by the Rev. Dr. Tyng, jr., and seconded by the Rev. John Johns of the Thirty-fourth street Methodist Church, was unanimously accorded to General Tremain, and after the singing of the Coronation Hymn the benediction was pronounced.

CHAPTER X.

TOUCHING JESUS.

SERMON BY THE REV. L. G. BARRETT, OF THE BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH, ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 5TH, 1876.

25. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,
26. And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,
27. When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched His garment.
28. For she said, If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole.—*Mark v.*

We are in Capernaum, so full of the works of Christ. The Saviour has left Levi's house and the great feast, at the call of anxious Jairus. As He walks, thronging crowds press Him and impede His progress. This delay, however, is the long sought and blessed opportunity of a poor, suffering woman. Twelve weary years has she groaned with disease—her very touch pollution, her all wasted upon physicians, her agony only aggravated. Hearing of the great Healer—perhaps Simon's wife's mother brought her the news—she dares to hope she may yet be cured. Timidity, however, and sense of shame prevent her openly visiting Jesus and personally imploring His aid. Perhaps unseen she may approach Him,—touch His robe as He passes by. At length, learning His presence in the city, the sufferer leaves her humble home, threads the city's narrow lanes, and stands in the midst of the great, eager crowd, pallid and weak, but anxious and determined—this very throng her golden hour. On she presses among the people, undaunted by their astonishment or chiding, oblivious to all surroundings, one idea possessing her—on—on—until she nears the wonderful man, and now by a bold, quick reach touches and actually grasps the fringed border of His cloak. Blessed touch! Suffering, sorrow, years of lingering death all gone! Enough—she will no further trouble the Teacher. Let the unknowing throng pass on. But stay! the Master turns; "Who touched my clothes?" Peter, in astonishment, points to the press of the multitude. The woman trembles, looks up, meets the searching but loving eye of Jesus. He has seen her! and, overflowing with gratitude, regardless of public gaze, the better of all her womanly shrinkings, she falls at her Deliverer's feet,

and, in unrestrained emotion, tells Him all her joy. The blessing is magnified: "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

Touching Jesus is our thought, and we notice:

I. Touching Jesus is TOUCHING GOD. When this poor sufferer touched Jesus, health instantly pulsated through every vein, though expensive years had been given to human skill in vain. But it brought also spiritual life. As with the paralytic let down through the roof into His presence, when Jesus said: "Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee;" as with the impotent man at Bethesda's pool, to whom the word was, "Thou art made whole; sin no more;" as with the woman whose devotion brought the blessed response, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven;" so with this anxious one, her's was a *soul-cure* as well.

But such healing comes only from God, even by the verdict of Christ's own enemies, in this same city, on the cure of the palsied man, when they exclaim: "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

Behold, then, a blessed and wonderful truth. In Jesus Christ human need and helplessness and Divine power and mercy meet. In touching Him we touch the great God. Before Christ came, Jehovah was unknown, save as symbolled by type, sacrifice, priest. To the Jew, trembling under Divine requirements and threats, the very name Jehovah was inconceivably grand. It must not be spoken. God dwelt in awful majesty; His more glorious presence, shrouded and concealed by the splendid vestment of a most gorgeous ceremonial, unseen, unapproached. Only over an avenue of blood to the Holy of Holies could approach to Him be even symbolled. Only through the blaze and thunder of Sinai could His voice be heard, and, even then, death fell upon every soul but God's own priests that dared touch the border of His holy mount. And what has been heathenism, but this *distancing* of God, countless idols dimly mirroring Him, and cruel and costly penance and sacrifice dreaming of reaching Him! And Romanism, what has she done but perpetuate and magnify the idea of a distant, awful and unreachable Jehovah! But Jesus comes, the God-man, "image of God," yet "likeness of men;" "who made all things," yet, "in the form of a servant;" "Lord of all," yet "obedient unto death;" pardoner of sin, yet "tempted in all points like as we;" "mighty God," yet "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh;" "Alpha and Omega, beginning and end, first and last," yet "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," bringing down God into humanity and lifting humanity up to God, thus bridging the hitherto impassable gulf, so that in Him, the way, the truth and the life, distance is anni-

hilated, the cloud of fire, big with the lightnings and thunder of His awfulness, is scattered, and "we have access unto the Father" Himself; yea, "made nigh through His blood," can come with holy "boldness and confidence" in filial love, and talk with and behold the very face of our God. In touching Jesus, the God-man, we touch Jehovah.

What, then? We touch One to help and save, as did the poor woman of our text. As sent the Messiah to John: "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up." In Jesus Christ, "the God with us," diseased humanity can find an antidote and deliverance, for this perfecting of humanity in God means that sin and its terrible consequences are slain, that death is robbed of his sting, that Hell and Satan are chained within the dungeons of darkness, and that forever. No longer, then, poor sinner, tremble under condemnation before an awful and angry and distant God. Come to the loving, human, pleading Jesus, touch Him for your infirmity, and know that in touching Him you are touching the very source Himself of mercy and life. The price is all paid, the door is wide open. Come, dear child of God, nearer, nearer to this blessed Jesus,—with whatever of darkness or sin, under never so heavy burden of affliction and sorrow,—come, even if you can only touch the hem of His garment, for, be assured, you thus draw near to and touch the great God, your heavenly Father.

And can you not touch Jesus? You might well despair, must you approach the all-holy and infinite God, just as He is, in all His bold and awful purity and power. But Jesus—the human Jesus, who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmity," and moves on the same plane with you, knowing every grief of your soul, "bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh,"—surely, you can approach Him, confide in and love Him, and even as a brother! Touch Him, then, oh! so quickly, but not as man only, but as the Almighty Pardoner, Sanctifier and Redeemer of the sinner.

II. Touching Jesus is touching OVERFLOWING MERCY.

Fill a glass with water, till it piles above the brim and can hold no more; the slightest jar causes its overflow. The moment the atmosphere attains a certain measure of moisture, the overplus descends in refreshing dew or rain. Travellers assert that, among the upper Alps, such is the superabundance of snow, and so delicate its dependence, sometimes the vibrations of the air caused by a shout, will, by starting small particles, and these others, and so on, result far down the mountain in a thundering avalanche. Let such fullness and superabundance liken the measure of Divine love. Here is a bottomless and boundless ocean. God is love. God is infinite love; and this infinite God *so* loved this lost world —world that was revelling in awful rebellion against Him—that

He *gave*—what?—His own Son—the best and supremest offering possible to an infinite God! Nor can we have even a human conception of this love, till we pass with the wrestling Christ those forty days' conflict in the wilderness, gather the blood drops of agony in Gethsemane, and look upon the pierced form and hear the dying groan of Calvary. "His mercy endureth forever." His is love unspeakable and past finding out; and it is great and so free, that "whosoever will"—every sinner before me—may experience its precious richness. Yea, the blessed Jesus, overflowing in mercy and healing through the border of His robe, in Capernaum's street, at the touch of a poor, trembling suppliant, truly and beautifully images God—this God of love.

And a touch can bring this overflow of mercy, simply a touch! Archimedes, with sufficient leverage, would move the world. One touch in faith by the trembling sinner of the robe of the passing Jesus moves the eternal God! No thunder need voice our wants. No costly offering of gold must open to His presence. No wings of the morning are necessary to waft us to His distant dwelling place. No sanctuary is necessary, no minister, no bended knee even, no eloquent words of address, nor any form whatever. He waits to catch our humble cry. So near is He, He feels the very pulsations of our heart. Our own poor, broken wails for relief, our sighs, our yearnings even, human and imperfect but real, sent up in the silent hour, amid daily care, from out the agony of sorrow, through the darkness of dying even, but in penitence and need—these can touch the God of all mercy.

Oh! the simplicity of the blessed Gospel! Why will the sinner agonize through years of condemnation, heaping up wrath against the day of wrath, striving by terrible self-accusations and long petitions to commend himself to God, and almost despairing of mercy, when one heart-touch of Jesus can fill him with joy! Not for our much speaking does God hear us. We bring no worth to Him. It is the Lamb of Golgotha, the blood of the everlasting covenant, that is the price of our redemption. And one look at the Crucified, however trembling, from howsoever hardened a heart, in true penitence and faith, is all God asks! Yea, the first simple heart-reach toward Him, as a Saviour of a lost soul, actually touches the springs of mercy, and sends eternal life pulsating through every avenue of our being!

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

"Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."

Oh! sinner, never forget this abounding mercy of God, and that He waits, longs to give it you. And remember that the

human, tender, sympathizing Jesus is this God of infinite mercy. And finally, that by one earnest, penitent, all-surrendering groan for help, you actually touch and possess eternal life.

III. Touching Jesus is BELIEVING JESUS.

Old Augustine said of this miracle: "She touches, the crowd presses." So does Jesus' question imply. All around Him presses and jostles the crowd, yet He notices it not—somebody touches Him. Anxious Jairus pleads with a father's agonizing heart for haste, ere his dear child die. Yet, even Jairus moves Him not—somebody touches Him. There is many a longing sufferer in that throng, come for mercy, and they all press hard to arrest His attention. Yet, whoever they are, of halt or blind or dumb, or sick, however anxious and needy, still He notices them not, for some one has touched Him, and turning about as He asks the question, He fixes His eye upon a trembling, weak and impoverished woman at His side, who, though despised of men and condemned of God, is the one, sole being of all that throng that is near enough to touch Him and receive a blessing.

"Now," says the lost sinner, who can find eternal life only by touching Christ, "what was that touch?" Let me tell you. It was not the pitiful extremity of the woman, nor her nearness to Jesus' person, nor her eager grasp of His cloak that brought mercy. Oh, no! others were just as near and as needy. But her's was the touch of *faith*. As with the Syro-phœnician woman, agonizing for her daughter, willing to take a crumb of mercy, when Jesus said, "O, woman, great is thy *faith*! Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt;" as with blind Bartimeus, at Jericho's wayside, who, hearing that Jesus of Nazareth drew near, sprang to his feet, flung aside his old, ragged cloak, and stumbled as best he could to Jesus, exclaiming, "Lord, that I might receive my sight!" to whom Jesus said, "Receive thy sight; thy *faith* hath saved thee." As with these and every recipient of mercy, so with this woman, "and He said unto her, Daughter, thy *faith* hath made thee whole."

We cannot, then, touch God but by faith. Oh, how the great throng merely press against Jesus! Multitudes call upon Him, but never touch Him in real faith. Men even claim to prophesy in His name, whose very words show a vital oneness with the vicarious Atoner impossible. Vast multitudes are hoping somehow to receive His salvation, whose whole lives are but living blasphemy of His holy name, and whom Jesus Himself as distinctly disowns as it were possible to do. Oh! how deceived! Merely pressing against the Christ, as He passes by! To touch Him is to believe Him—is to fall at His feet in deep submission, and for dear life, in complete faith in loving mercy, and actually grasp and hold a real Saviour. It is to receive Christ

into the heart, into a sin-lost and guilty heart, in true penitence and perfect surrender, as the only, complete, God-manifest Saviour of a sin-condemned and death-appointed race. It is to hang with the dying malefactor in the helplessness of death, and out of that extremity in perfect trust exclaim: "Lord, remember me!" Christ is not a mere example; He is a Saviour. Man is not merely diseased; he is lost. And without a faith that accepts Him as the Divine-human atonement, and implies godly sorrow for sin, complete submission of heart, and identification of life with the holy Jesus, never, never can the sinner touch a life-imparting God. He that believeth, saved; he that believeth not, damned. A true and a false touch of Christ—one that looks to a mere historical Christ, and that trusts Divine goodness to the denial of His justice; and another that accepts the God-man as the lost sinner's complete sacrifice, and, in absolute dependence, rests upon Him. Which touch, dear soul, has been yours?

IV.—Touching Jesus is CONFESSING JESUS.

Why Jesus' searching question? Not from ignorance, surely. Not to rebuke a poor, trembling suppliant. Rather, it was to lead the woman into the completest blessing possible to her. Impelled by strong faith, and by a fancy that, in some mysterious way, healing would follow any contact with His person, she had touched His garment and been cured; and now she sought retreat, keeping her joy and blessing to herself, feeling the superstitious element in her otherwise perfect faith, and refusing Jesus the honor of her cure. But this spirit must be rebuked, and the people must know Him as her healer. Hence that searching gaze and those heart-thrilling words, revealing His knowledge of her cure, and compelling humble, grateful confession of her Lord and God. "And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and, falling down before Him, she declared unto Him, before all the people, for what cause she had touched Him, and how she was healed immediately."

Real touch of Christ by any soul must always be a *confession*. He will allow no stolen mercy. Jesus loves that soul that is not ashamed of Him. Once He healed ten lepers, when only one returned and gave God glory. But this one got a blessing lost by all the others, for He said to him, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Christ assumed the deepest humiliation for us, and the disciple must not be above his Lord. Ah! the confessing disciple Jesus loves; blind Bartimeuses, that follow Him in the way, praising God; Samaritan women, who, having found Him at the well, go into the city saying, "Come see a man that hath told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?" Yes, confessing women! For, if one call is greater than another to-day, it is that for earnest, high-souled, cultivated, Christian women,

who, beholding their sisterhood lost in intemperance and vice in Christian lands, and sunk in revolting heathenism in other lands, shall consecrate themselves to God and humanity, and go forth anywhere and everywhere to redeem woman.

Believer in Jesus, are you confessing Him? Have you made open profession of your new-found joy? As a soldier of Christ, do you wear the uniform, and further, do you wield the sword? Depend upon it, this is the Divine law. You may ignore it; you may think to hide out of Christ's sight in the crowd. Im possible! Christ is watching you; He owns you; He will have you. And suddenly He will reveal to you His ownership and your dependence, by some terrible affliction that shall make you fly to Him for refuge. It is dangerous to hide your light. "Ye are my witnesses." "Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep,"—"confess me, preach me everywhere in this lost world." Oh! disciple of Christ, let this motto be in your heart, your home, your ledger and on your gold, consecrating all to Him: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins." For if we confess Him, He will confess us, but if we deny Him, He will deny us in that last day.

Nor let the sinner ever dream of touching Christ and finding life, until he is willing, if need be, to be known as a seeker and a disciple anywhere and by anybody. All pride must be slain and Christ must be all and in all.

And thus the woman of Capernaum touched Jesus. And so has many another sufferer. Over in Cana a proud nobleman touched Him for his dying son. In a little Galilean village an unclean leper cries: "Lord, thou canst make me clean," and touches Christ. Down at Bethesda's Pool an impotent man succeeds in touching Him. At Jericho's gate blind Bartimeus feels after and touches Him. Out in Galilee a withered hand touches Him. On the Cross a dying malefactor touches Him. Oh! God's mercy in Christ! A Magdalen, a Nicodemus, a Saul, a Judson, a Bunyan and countless others.

And many a soul has kept touching Him—clinging to Him for dear life, amid temptations, burdens and deaths, the only, ever-present and Almighty Helper.

You can touch Him, poor soul, however bowed down with sin and despair, *you* can touch the God of all grace in Jesus Christ. Indeed, ever has God been touching you, through countless mercies, terrible providences, a convicting conscience, trying to give you His love. Touch Him then! Oh! touch Him now, for as with Bartimeus of old, as with this anxious woman of our text, He is already passing by, and if you *fail* to reach forth and touch Him, *it may be forever too late.*

CHAPTER XI.

GREAT SALVATION.

SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM LLOYD, OF THE WASHINGTON SQUARE M. E. CHURCH, ON THURSDAY, JULY 6TH, 1876.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"—*Hebrews ii.* 3.

In nothing does the greatness of the Apostle Paul's mind more impress us than in the fact, that the epistle to the Hebrews, the actual authorship of which has been and is still matter of doubt, should be so generally ascribed to him. Whether written by Luke or Apollos, it is so decidedly Pauline in its doctrine, argument and spirit, that the writer, if not Paul himself, was thoroughly impregnated with the great Apostle's thoughts. I have often compared this epistle, in the grandeur of its subjects, with the majestic flow and fullness of its style, to a magnificent river, rolling through a country of wondrous scenic beauty, now gliding gently by a scene of charming quiet, the river's breast of blue, flecked with water lilies, looking like an embroidery of gold and green upon an azure ground; then sweeping swiftly between towering mountains, which throw their heavy shadows upon the water, while here and there some rifts in the mountain side afford glimpses into far-stretching vales, suggestive of still greater charms. Suddenly a bend in the river brings us into an open space, and into the presence of a scene of such surpassing sublimity, that we involuntarily feel all that preceded was but a fit prelude to the glory upon which the eye now rests.

So we pass down this broad stream of Pauline eloquence, which sets forth the great salvation God has wrought for our

race. A salvation in its inception reaching far back into the dim past; its grandeur flashing through ancient prophets and seers, as we have seen the sunlight flash upon some mountain peak; flowing on until it is seen in the incarnation and life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then as we see it completed in His death, sealed by His resurrection; and as we follow Him in His ascension, while Heaven's gates roll open wide to let the mighty Saviour in, and the voice of Deity is heard saying: "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool;"—before the grandeur of such salvation we stand entranced, and break the silence only to exclaim with Paul: "*How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* which, at the first, began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him."

Firstly, I will speak upon the great salvation.

I. *Great in its origination.* The geologist who desires to impress his readers with the almost fabulous age of our world, and the marvelous changes through which it has passed in reaching its present condition, takes us by the hand, and leads us back through vast cycles of time; the primeval forests teeming with strange life, until he brings us to the furthermost shore of time; and we hear the booming of the billows of the chaotic deep, ere the word was spoken which scattered the night that brooded over it, and out of confusion evolved order. Our views of the greatness of divine power and wisdom are enlarged at every step taken. So in contemplating this great salvation, we must study its origination. In order to do this, we must go back to the birthday of our race. We behold the earth clothed in verdure, and radiant with the smile of its Creator. No discord mars the music; no tears have as yet fallen upon its bosom; man, the last of God's works, the strange connecting link between matter and spirit, walks amid the works of the Creator—crowned monarch of them all. But soon a shadow steals over the scene; you know the story; man not content to be man only—*aims to be as God.* It is but a single act, but as vast forests lie enfolded in the single acorn, so all the evil and sorrow of human life were enwrapped in that one deed. It wonderfully enlarged man; but it at the same time ruined him. It placed him in a new relation at once to both God and the devil. While it flung off the beneficent restraints of God's law, it at the same moment clasped on his limbs the fetters of slavery to evil. As the earthly Eden, the home of man innocent, faded away and left not a vestige behind to mark the spot where it stood, so the light of innocence faded away from the souls of the sinning pair, and the night of conscious guilt gathered over them. Out in the wilderness they sat, moaning and shivering in despair. Then arose the question, *must the race perish.*

It were easy for the Almighty, with one swift, sharp stroke of vengeance, to hurl the rebels out of existence, but the history of man would have been that of an abortive experiment on the part of God, and the night of annihilation would have covered the wreck. But there would have remained two unsolved problems before the universe, viz: Whether a being of the composite nature of man could live holily, and then whether, having fallen, God could rescue and restore him. Inconceivable must have been the suspense of the Heavenly ranks, as the news of man's revolt was proclaimed. The Apocalyptic seer speaks of there being silence in heaven once for the space of half an hour. When Daniel was in the lion's den, the King of Babylon would have no sound of music or mirth in the palace. But it seems to me that silence most profound must have reigned in heaven at this time. The notes of praise floated away and the harpers stood with their fingers upon the last string touched. "*Who will go for us?*" Silence still; man stands bending in shame and anguish, and thickly the shadows gather of the coming night. In that hour did the Son of God elect to be the Redeemer, and the silence was broken by the words, "Lo! I come. In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O God." Then was the great salvation proclaimed. Man was standing upon the crumbling edge of perdition, when the voice of the eternal Father cried, "Save him from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom." O! this is a great salvation, so great that the mind of God alone could compass it. Had the thought of the possibility of God incarnating Himself to die for man entered the mind of the tallest archangel, it would have been frowned back as a blasphemy. *Great*, for the power of Omnipotence alone could accomplish it. Had all heaven's host avowed their willingness to die for rebel man, the mighty sacrifice would have been inadequate. *So great salvation.*

II. *Great in its development.*

The law of all the divine operations seems to be that of gradual development. It is so in nature. The day does not burst upon our world in a moment, the gloom of night giving place to the glare of noon. The light comes gently, first tipping the hill-tops with glory, then stealing into the valleys; the sun climbing up the ethereal steep, until it reaches the meridian glory. Winter does not vanish in a moment, but the transition is gentle and gradual. One by one the rivulets are unchained and the rivers loosed; the buds peep out from the trees; here and there a venturous flower looks out, trembling in the breeze as though fearful of its reception, and an occasional bright winged bird flits by, and a songster trills from the tree top. Then comes the full foliage and the outburst of nature's grand Summer concert.

So with man. Childhood, boyhood, manhood is the law. As in the natural so in the spiritual kingdom. The first promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," was the dawn of a heavenly day upon the night of human guilt and woe. It was the prophecy of the rising of a sun brighter than had flooded Eden with splendor. Man was spared, the race was permitted to multiply, bearing some of the shame and consequence of the sin, but with the pledge of ultimate deliverance. Spared—perpetuated for the very purpose of salvation. How grand is the development of this salvation, as we trace it through all history. I have seen some fabrics, in the weaving of which a golden thread has been passed over the loom, and so wondrously had it been inwoven, that amid all the colors and changes of light, the golden thread appeared. So through all history—through the struggles and the triumphs of men; in all the sacrifices which lay bleeding upon the world's altars; in all thought, whether flashing in sparks from the minds of heathen sages, or beaming with a steadier luster from inspired prophets; through all the warp and woof of human history, the scarlet thread of redemption runs. Look at history in any light you may, you find it leading to the Lamb of God, who out of the sins and sorrows of humanity has woven for Himself the royal fabric which decks Him as King of Kings. In the development of this great salvation, came the incarnation, life and death of the Son of God. Why this was necessary I know not. The Bible says it was, and I am glad to accept the fact. O, it is a great salvation indeed! God incarnate to redeem rebels against Himself. All of redemption was wrapped up in the first promise. Not a pain, a groan, or a tear, but was comprehended and endured for this.

The stupendous stoop from the throne of Diety to the manger of Bethlehem; the servant's form worn for three and thirty years; the fierce conflict of forty days in the wilderness with the great foe of God and our race; the pain of contact with all that was unholy and saddening in man's body and soul; the hatred of enemies and the falsity of friends; the shuddering awe of Gethsemane; the cup pressed to His lips, filled with the bitterness of human woe; the traitor's kiss; the ruffian band; the mock trial; the scourge and thorn crown; the swooning agony of the march along the *via dolorosa* to Golgotha; the nails; the jeers of men; the awful sense of desolation extorting the cry, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me;" the death sweat and the grave,—all this was foreseen, accepted and endured that this great salvation might be accomplished for us. O, sinner, see what thy redemption cost! Answer me as the Saviour's tears and blood emphasize the question: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

III. *Great in its consummation.* This consummation includes two things:

First.—The deliverance of man from the greatest of all perils. Need I again remind you of the danger in which sin places your soul? I know some of you treat this as a bug-bear. Talk to you of a hell! Bah! You are not to be scared by nursery tales like that. Hear! ye despisers, and tremble. Who is the preacher of perdition? It is He who travelled from Heaven's throne to Calvary's cross to save you from it. Whose voice is that, which, in the tones of a judge, speaks of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is never quenched? Whose voice is it that will pronounce upon the impenitent the sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels?" It is the voice of Him who cried to all wandering, sin-sick souls, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

O! sinner, if you partake not of this great salvation, you will find yourself at last, *a lost soul.* O! the awful, shuddering gloom into which the soul is plunged when the thread of a wasted life is severed, and it drops out of the homes of the living into the pit. To deliver you from this is the purpose of this great salvation.

Second.—The elevation of man to highest happiness and dignity.

There can be no happiness without holiness. Pardon only could not make a soul happy. The old life must pass away, and new life stream into the soul. This great salvation consummated in the soul does this:—It thrills the soul with a life which is one with Christ, which is in harmony with all that is living, beautiful, blessed in the universe. From the crumbling edge of hell, it leaps up as it were to heaven's gate, singing with the glorified the words:

> Thou hast loved me and washed me from my sins in Thine own Blood;
> Not unto me, not unto me, but to Thy Name, O Lord, be all the glory.

To the soul who partakes of this great salvation, life becomes henceforth one grand battle-march with an unceasing hymn of victory. The world of light is its home, and neither death nor hell can rob it of its title to enter there. But there is more than this. By this salvation, man is raised from deepest degradation to highest honor. The prodigal flings aside his rags and his husks, and sits down at the feast radiant in the best robe. The slave of sin drops his fetters and lifts his hands in the gladness of conscious liberty, a son of God, child of the King, heir of immortality. O! this is a great salvation. It stretches out into the eternities. We see but little of it, comparatively, here, yet that little is beyond compare. We have felt something of it in our

own souls; we have seen its grandeur in the chamber of the dying saint; splendor spreading over the dying face touching it into majestic beauty, as though a reflection of light that never dims was fallen there, and the words of the poet have fitly expressed the dying glance of farewell and of triumph.

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring.
Lend, lend your wings! I mount, I fly!
Oh, grave! where is thy victory?
Oh, death! where is thy sting?

But there is a grander consummation yet to be, when from north and south, east and west, the redeemed shall come and sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb. They shall come, filling the New Jerusalem with songs, and the new earth and Heaven with sons. They shall come, prodigals, from distant deserts, where He found them ready to perish, to love Him with passionate devotedness, and drink eternal joy from His ever living fountains. They shall come, countless millions, swelling the song: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches and glory and honor."

O, this is the vision Jesus saw when from Calvary's cross He looked away beyond the waste of time. He looks on the vision still. Each day it brightens. Each soul saved brings it nearer. Angels gaze upon the vision and in it find the theme for their highest joy and loudest anthems. A sinner saved! Ring all the bells, strike all your harps of gold. *O, this is a great salvation!*

Lastly.—I will briefly urge the question of my text.

How shall ye escape? Escape what? Why, the loss of all that this salvation means, and the unutterable sorrow sin entails. I paint no horrified pictures of despair. I say if there be no danger, if there be no hell, then this great salvation is a great mockery. I say if you neglect Christ, you lose all that can make your existence aught but an eternal curse. I once saw a man of brilliant promise, but who had perversely wrecked his life, blighted all the hopes of friends, suddenly confronted with the dreadful loss, by hearing read a picture of his early possibilities drawn by a master hand, and that man's throat swelled, and great tears trickled rapidly down his cheek. *Weeping over the lost and irretreivable.* So will it be in an infinitely sadder sense with you if you neglect this great salvation. O, there is an infinite pathos in the words of Jesus: "There shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

How shall you escape? By your own power or skill? Oh, no! These will be of no avail when death comes.

NEGLECT WILL BE AS FATAL AS REJECTION.

A vessel, richly laden and with many passengers, was nearing

at nightfall the coast of Ireland. It had safely weathered the perils of a long voyage, and was now nearly home. The clouds hung low and heavy in the west, and the moan of the wind on the waves indicated a storm. The captain was a young man, self-confident and proud. Some of the passengers went to him and said, "Captain, will you not signal for a pilot?" "*I am my own pilot*," was the curt reply. Darker grew the night, and the storm rose to a furious height. Panic-stricken, the passengers again said, "Captain, will you not signal for a pilot?" "I AM MY OWN PILOT," was the reply again. But when morning broke that good ship was a wreck, and almost all on board had perished. All lost from neglect to get a pilot.

O! I entreat you, do not risk death and all the retributions of eternity without Christ. Neglect this salvation and you will be cast up upon the strands of perdition a shattered wreck.

How shall ye escape, if ye neglect so great salvation?

CHAPTER XII.

LET US ALONE.

SERMON BY REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D., ON SUNDAY, JULY 16, 1876.

"Let us alone: what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him."—*Mark i:* 24, 25.

How manifold were the questions that our Lord Jesus answered. He was plied with strange queries which would have sadly puzzled any other than Him. They fell about Him as the arrows and darts of an army of bowmen and spearmen; but He not only evaded them—He took them up and sent them back with divine force. All the different schools of philosophy, the contrasted sects of the Jewish religion, the partizans of Herod, and the seditious of the people, bigots and infidels, the Sanhedrim and devils were confederate in the purpose and effort to entrap Jesus of Nazareth. They strove to ensnare Him in His talk, and they were worsted in every effort. They gathered in motley groups about Him, determined by the variety and contradictoriness of their questions to demonstrate His ignorance, and so to confound Him before the people. But He never lacked, through His many years of life, so far as we have His sayings recorded, an appropriate and conclusive answer to every question, whether the traditions of the law, or the subtleties of the schools, or the prevailing interpretations of the prophets, whether the lawfulness of tribute, the reasons for divorce, the philosophy of the resurrection, or the economy of the future life were in debate. He endured a worse cross-examination than Socrates ever conceived, and came off the victor in every contest; for He was compelled, without the possibility of forethought, to meet these questions sometimes in the street, some-

times in the synagogue, then in the court of the temple. On the instant He must adjust the truth to as many systems of speculation and morals as there were tempting mouths and men. He proved His mission in the face of every sort of provocation. He was conqueror over every conceivable cavil. His replies demonstrated a readiness of wisdom and resources of knowledge which, as in the passage before us, elicited the wonder of the people. Whilst never thrusting Himself into the war of words, which was the peculiar mark of the generation in which He lived, Jesus Christ never evaded their curiosity, nor shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Again and again did they invade His retirement. They strove by all sorts of suggestions to cause the laugh against Him among the common people, who heard Him gladly. They were mortified, however, by their constant discomfitures, and hastily retired from the conflict, confessing defeat, until at last the hour came when it is written: "Neither durst any man from that day forward ask Him any more questions."

But these questions and answers have outlived that generation. They make the chief matters of social and religious discussion of to-day. The world has not changed its relations to Jesus Christ. It has changed its customs, its form of government, the way in which it applies and enforces its laws; but it has not been exorcised of its opposition to the Nazarene. There is the same malignity of motive, the same disingenuousness of method, the same bitterness of men towards the person and truth of Jesus Christ, as when He walked in Nazareth or worshipped in Jerusalem. Nay, the extending knowledge and influence of His gospel, in this nineteenth century, only gives malice more occasion, profanity more oaths, immorality a deeper dye than it had in the olden time. The queries to which Jesus gave answers have increased in intensity. But whilst the world is repeating its old questions, would it not be well for Christian people to recall the answers? I hold that there is not a question of infidelity which is now asked, there is not a single objection of social philosophy, which is now projected against the gospel, which was not held eighteen hundred years ago, and answered as soon as asked, and in this Book is to be found a solution of the problem. We have that as our introductory thought this evening. The world is busy in its disputes, but it is very careful to conceal the fact that it was once worsted and overwhelmed, that its sophistries have been exposed, that its satires have been despoiled, its lances of logic have been broken, so that the feathered ends of pointless shafts alone are within its power. Let the old questions that are revived be met by all Christian people with the old annihilating answers, for in these the Lord Jesus has left us an inexhaustible

armory of defence. The man that sticks closest to the Bible is the man that shall have the most glorious triumph.

Our text is one of the first examples of our Lord's marvellous self-possession and wise reply. St. Mark tells us He had come to Capernaum. It was the Sabbath day. He entered into the synagogue, as was His custom; He expounded the law, and the people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority. There was among the worshippers one possessed of an unclean spirit, who cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth?" This was his prayer in the synagogue. The Lord rebuked him. "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." Two persons were recognized —the demon and the poor possessed one. For the one He had rebuke; to the other His tone was full of tender compassion. I suppose that the circumstances of this scene are fulfilled to-night. This is the Lord's day. It is the hour of prayer; we are in our synagogue; and doubtless there are some persons here who in soliloquy have said, over and over again, let me alone; what have I to do with Jesus of Nazareth? May God the Holy Spirit make plain to you, dear friend, the voice of rebuke, and may the commanding voice of Jesus say: "Come out of him;" so that clothed and in your right mind you shall be found before the evening is over, sitting at Jesus' feet.

I. Now I have to say in reference to this text, first, LISTEN TO THE PRAYER OF INDIFFERENCE: "Let us alone; what have we to do with Jesus of Nazareth?" The time of demoniacal possessions has passed; the day of devils is over; and yet the devil still has his day. Whatever may have been the philosophy of these strange possessions, our Lord's power and His treatment is sufficiently suggestive for us. They are matter of history, and we may as well leave them here. But who shall say there is not a resemblance still to be recognized among men. It is said of those possessed of evil spirits that they foamed at the mouth, gnashed with their teeth, and pined away. This man was torn of the devil. It may have been a species of insanity, or some form of disease we know nothing about; but the description is very like that of one who is suffering something to be done to him by his sins, by his iniquities, by his vicious habits which he has contracted, and which are the masters of his will. Surely, this poor possessed one is only a type of that sad suffering, which remorse will bye and bye make a part of some of our experience. If anything be needed to demonstrate the parallel, we have it in our Lord's own words, speaking to the devil as discriminated from the man. Now I think I can illustrate this in all our experience. Here is a poor murderer. We go down and sit by the door of his cell. He crouches in a corner. The time of passion has past. There was

a moment when he was inflamed by vengeance. His finger was quick to pull the trigger. A moment after he was exorcised of frensy; and we look through the grating in the cell door at the poor sinner; we execrate his crime; we are glad he is there; society is safer because that barred door is well locked; and yet we pity the poor fellow. We distinguish between the awful evil nature, which was aroused in the moment of revenge, and the poor man, who has been made the slave of his worst passions. If we were Godlike we should love that man; because we are only human we pity him. Even so does Jesus regard every sinner. Your evil heart of unbelief Jesus abhors; but that soul of yours which has been subjected to this evil nature, He loves, and tenderly longs to make it a possessor of all His riches and grace. Indifference to Christ must be a sort of unclean spirit, for it raises the old cry. How proudly do young men walk the streets, in their very manner saying: "Let us alone; what have we to do with Jesus of Nazareth? Churches, Bibles, tracts, prayer meetings, what have we to do with you? Let us alone." It is the soliloquy which, if men were sincere, they would express in trumpet tones.

I have called this the prayer of indifference. First of all, it is *a prayer for something that can never be granted.* "Let us alone." How natural and commonplace are the words. All that any sinner in this world wants is neglect. Do not intrude upon them. Do not warn them. Do not rebuke them. Do not persuade them. Let them be. This is something which cannot be permitted. It is the voice of all those that are corrupters of youth in this great city; all the men who spend their lives in pulling down the purity and destroying the innocence of the youth. All they ask is to burrow in the dark and not be discovered, as we turn up the mole in the Spring time. There are those all about us who are themselves vicious and leprous as any possessed or diseased person in Jerusalem, and all they want is to be permitted to maintain their independence and freedom from control. The secret sinner—the man that does things of which it is a shame even to speak—he does not want them revealed. Let him alone; let him hide himself in the dark. That poor child who dallies with impure and sinful thoughts in the secresy of imagination, all he wants is this let-alone policy. The infidel, the moralist, the man who, so far as his life is concerned, is the open enemy and blasphemer of Jesus Christ—this is the prayer of the whole host. Now in so far as all these are governed by the same spirit of indifference to Christ, they have a common plea. Though they are the victims of the power of evil, they fancy themselves free, and resent every intrusion upon their self-satisfied condition. The physician who was called yesterday

to the patient, suffering with that scourge of this nineteenth century, had before him an exhibition which uttered this same appeal. All the cancer wants is to be let alone; it will soon eat into the life. Out in the country, in the Summer time, there is a pool; its surface is green, and its exhalations are death. The farmer comes with his spade and digs a passage through which it may run into the woods; and the voice of the pool is, "Let me alone; let the miasma spread." In the time of cholera it seems a very hard thing that the officers of the law can break in the door and take the person who is infected, and the cause of the evil in the community, to a place of refuge. He cries in his bed, and his family unite in the refrain, "Let me alone." My dear friend, the cry of the indifferent soul is like that of all these physical and natural facts—an impossibility. It can never be granted. Dost thou know, my friend, that this is God's world, and not yours; and He will never let this world alone until every jot and tittle of sin is purged out of it. This is Grace's world, and Grace is like the light of Heaven—it will drive out every shade of darkness; it is like salt—it will keep every particle from putrefaction. It cannot rest until its influences are effectual. This is Faith's world. Fruition has not come yet. And Faith, resting upon the power covenanted to its support, must wage an irreconcilable warfare against all evil works and workers until it subdues them to the Crown of Christ. This is Hope's world. It longs for the city that knows no sin. But as in itself, so in others, does Hope strive for purification as Christ is pure. This is Love's world. True Love is of God, and cannot be content until the world is restored to its allegiance. The first duty of every true believer is to set himself in absolute defiance against this prayer of indifferent man; he cannot be let alone.

It is said in the life of one of the old Methodist preachers in this country, named Nolly, that he met somewhere in Ohio a man who was travelling with his whole family in a covered wagon, and as soon as he arrived he went up and spoke to him about the salvation of his soul. The man was a blasphemer, and with the most violent profanity cursed the good preacher. Nolly hardly understood his bitterness, and asked him to explain himself, and he told the story. That story is a testimony to the usefulness of the old society of Methodists in the early history of this country, which I am most glad to repeat, for I do believe that if any denomination of Christians has done good, constant pioneer work for Christ, it is that Church. The man said to Nolly, "You ask me why I swear? I will tell you. I lived down in North Carolina, in a piece of woods, far off from any city, and the first thing I knew a Methodist preacher came and preached in a school house near by, and my wife was converted. I never could hear the end

of it; she read and she prayed, and she taught the children, so that I was bored all day long; I made up my mind that I would leave; and I travelled up to Virginia. When I reached Virginia, the first man that showed himself was another Methodist preacher; he talked to me, and prayed, and annoyed me, until after a few days I made up my mind that I must go farther; I did move up farther north, built a little shanty, and had hardly got fixed when another Methodist preacher came along, and he would not let me alone. He talked to me, and my wife prayed, and my children pleaded, until at length, to get rid of it, I made up my mind that I would come into the wilderness of Ohio; and now I have hardly stopped my team, when here you are, another Methodist preacher. I came all the way from North Carolina to get rid of you." Nolly said to him: "My friend, I don't think it is possible. If you go to heaven, you certainly will find Methodist preachers there; if you go to the place of the lost, I am afraid you will find some cast-away Methodist preachers there; and you see how it is here; so you had better submit; you never will be let alone; you never can be permitted to maintain this position." Dear Christian friends, that is our responsibility. If we are filled with Christ's spirit of aggressive work, we never can let people alone, though we do it with the utmost courtesy and gentleness. The Holy Spirit never will let you alone. This is a prayer that will never be granted, and should not be granted Oh! what more awful thing could be done! "Ephraim is turned to his idols; let him alone." Suppose God should say that to you, young man: "Let him alone. Spirit of God, so long pleading, henceforth let that man alone. Conscience, so constantly witnessing, let that man alone. Minister of God, though it break thine heart, let that sinner alone." To be left alone is to be sent with the momentum of our depravity to the place of the lost. The man who is not held back from hell will go to his doom as a logical necessity.

But then this prayer of indifference *contains something that cannot be denied.* "What have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth?" Indifference is continually in many forms repeating this same query. These people are saying something after this fashion: "It will do very well for you who are believers in Christ, who confess Him, who expect something from Him—it will do very well for you religious people to go to church, hear sermons, observe Sundays, read the Bible; these are all yours; they belong to you; they do not belong to us. What have we to do with Jesus?" "I have no part in them," such a person would say; and so appeals are spurned and invitations derided. But see how this plea will answer before civil government. Jesus Christ is somebody outside of thyself, and thou hast to do with Him after a strange fashion. Suppose

some one should say, "What is law to me? I am a lawless man. Laws are made for law-abiding people. They observe them. I am a ruffian. Talk to me about what I shall say, or what I shall do! If I like to spend my time in selling liquor, to burn up the bodies and souls of men, I will do so, regardless of any prohibitory law." But an officer comes along, "My friend, I want you." "What have I to do with a law officer?" "There is a prison; perhaps you will have something to do with that." A silly fool is the man that tries to fight against government. But now let me ask: Was government made only for men's bodies? Is there no government for men's souls—that within them, which controls their bodies? I tell thee thou art living under a Divine government. You are living under the Sovereign laws of that God who made you, who continues your being, and who can take you out of life, and the sooner you recognize that fact the wiser you will be. Thou canst not isolate thyself. Thou art either a subject or a rebel. Thou canst not help recognizing Jesus. God controls all things by Him, preserves all things by the word of His power, redeems all by His precious blood, sanctifies all by His spiritual indwelling; He will judge all by that man Jesus Christ, whom He hath appointed to be the judge of both the living and the dead. Oh, sir, are you an anomaly in this world? Are you the only man outside of this government? Are you the only man that can successfully rebel against God? I tell thee thou hast all things to do with Jesus Christ: sins to be forgiven, infirmities to be strengthened, temptations to be resisted, duties to be performed, virtues to be educated. Thou hast to do with no one else. He in His gracious Gospel is thy only refuge and help and hope. Somewhat every soul must have to do with Jesus. He may have to do with His grace now, in tender submission, in willing acceptance and joyful obedience. If not, I warn you solemnly, my dear young friend, that you must have to do with His awful wrath at the last; one or the other we must accept; it is impossible to evade both, and he who makes the attempt will lose his eternal life as the result of his folly.

But now, again, in this prayer of indifference, we have *something that cannot be endured.* "Art Thou come to destroy us?" Poor soul! he only knew Jesus Christ as a destroyer. He did not know Him in the preciousness of His promises, and in His relations as a Saviour. Every twinge of conscience, every shadow across his path of life, every bereavement, every loss, every failure is only to the unbeliever the prophecy of some darker disaster that is to come. It is an awful thing to be unreconciled to God—to have God's arrow pointed at you, even though it fly not from the bow. What terrific words are those, which are used to describe the future condition of the indifferent! Somebody asks,

"How shall I be lost?" *Neglect so great salvation.* Do nothing. Stay where you are. That is the way to be lost. It does not need very black sins. As a man dies in neglect, so judgment finds him. As judgment finds him, so eternity holds him. "Hast Thou come to destroy us before our time?" Oh, dear friends, it is a fearful association to have with the name of Jesus. He has not come for that. This is the time of grace; this is the time of pardon. "I am not come to destroy," is His voice now, "but to fulfill," in your hearts, all My love, all My purposes of forgiveness. "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Whenever you have the other thought, it is a suggestion of the Evil one to keep you back from Jesus Christ. Pray not this prayer of indifference again. Say not "Let us alone; what have we to do with Jesus;" but look to Him as a Saviour, not a destroyer; as one ready to build thee up, not to cast thee down.

II. Now I would learn something from THE ANSWER OF OUR LORD. How authoritative and sententious it is! "Hold thy peace. Come out." There is no time now for argument; there is no permission for persuasion. This is not a moment for negotiation; only for command. Would that some good Christian people would learn that. How many hours we waste in arguing things that ought never to be argued. The Lord Jesus Christ addresses them; "Come out!" and His voice gives the victory.

But I have to say in reference to this answer, that it proves one thing very conclusively—*that the witness of devils is worthless.* This devil says: "I know Thee who Thou art—the Holy One of God." This was a most complimentary confession; but well He knew that the devil confessed the truth to disgrace it. Any testimony from the father of lies, and from any servant of the father of lies, is to be despised above all other things. I hold that there is something ineffably pusillanimous in the prominence given by some Christian people to the extorted testimony of those who have not by experience known the power of the gospel. ROUSSEAU, for instance, how often is he quoted. To all his immoral precepts he appended a statement preferring JESUS CHRIST to SOCRATES. The story is told of ETHAN ALLEN, a great infidel: When about to die, his daughter came to him and asked him which faith she should follow, her father's or her mother's, who was a Christian. Ethan Allen replied in his agony, "Follow your mother's, my child, follow your mother's; it is the only faith that will stand the test of this hour." An English nobleman, who was hanged, when called to the scaffold, said he had always regarded the Lord's Prayer as a very useful and valuable contribution to devotional literature. NAPOLEON said that Jesus Christ was more than a man; and he knew men. And all these are quoted as testimonies

to the gospel. Such men know no more about the gospel than the unclean birds that floated over the tabernacle knew the meaning of the sacrifice! Such extorted testimony is absolutely worthless. I would rather have the witness of the smallest child who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, than that of the most prominent philosopher that ever lived, who knew not by experience the power of the gospel. "Ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord. Testify to what you know, to that which has run through your soul, and made you what you are, and men will rely upon your testimony. It is not the great men in the world who always know the greatest thing. God reveals His most precious truths sometimes to the most ignorant and the most insufficient in the wisdom of this world.

But then again, the answer teaches us that *the word of Jesus is sufficient.* How instantaneous was the result. That which no process of medical skill and science could secure the word of Jesus accomplished. And His word is just as powerful now as it was then. Yet how many who have indeed heard His voice are waiting for some longer and more involved experience. How many here say, "Oh! if the preacher would say something that would touch the right spot—say something that meant me—I might give up and be Christ's" Dear friend, has not Jesus said, "Come out!" to your sin and evil heart of unbelief in you. It will never come out in any other way. I might talk till midnight, and never turn your will an atom. I profess before you that I never stand up in this place to speak with any expectation that my words are to be effectual. Unless God the Spirit works with them and uses them, they are poor breath. Man cannot help you. Jesus must speak; and when He does speak to you, then the cure is accomplished. Argue not with yourself; give up this evil heart of yours to-night. Take the Satan that dwelleth in you to Gethsemane. Show him your Lord suffering. Take him to Golgotha; show him the Lord dying for you; make him listen to the words "It is finished." Take him to the open tomb, and bid him testify that your Lord is risen. Take him to the first chapter of Acts, and see the Lord ascending; hear His words of pardon and peace. Let me tell thee, if thou wilt this night consecrate thyself to Him, and make thine evil heart of unbelief go to those sacred places with thee, thou wilt have no unbelief to-morrow morning; Jesus will say "Come out," and it shall be done.

But then, I learn from this answer, again, that *the work of recovery is painful.* The sullen spirit inflicts all the sorrows within its power. Still malignant, though doomed to obey, he convulsed the poor sufferer. The sorrows of conversion are the work of Satan. If the sinner's faith was clear, he would have

nothing but joy; even his godly sorrow would be joy. The true way to believe is to believe right off, on the basis of God's word, and not wait for any of those awful experiences within ourselves. They are caused by Satan and not by the Spirit of God. Sometimes he gives dark doubts, bitter blasphemies, injects all sorts of suspicion. SPURGEON says "the Devil drives his own herds into our field, and strives to make us take them in." RALPH ERSKINE says "the Devil brings his brats to our door, and asks us to father them." There are no foundlings so noisy as the Devil's. They are not ours. We are suffering something from the powers of evil, by all these troubles thus brought upon us.

And then the last thought I have from the answer is that *the wonder of men is Salvation.* See in the twenty-seventh verse: "They were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this?" In its theory, personal salvation is marvellous, but its practical application both amazes and awes. The transformations in character and life, which the Gospel in all ages has caused, have been its unimpeachable arguments. The old teacher, LACTANTIUS, is quoted as saying: "Give me a man who is choleric, abusive in his language, headstrong and unruly; with a very few words, the words of God, I will render him as gentle as a lamb. Give me a greedy, covetous, parsimonious man; with the words of God I will return him a gracious creature, freely bestowing his money by handsful. Give me an unjust man; and on a sudden he shall become honest, wise and virtuous." So was SAUL the persecutor changed into Paul the Apostle. And AUGUSTINE the profligate by the truth of a single text was transformed into a preacher of righteousness. Well may men wonder, for such effects can be produced by the wisdom and might of God alone. Now it will be the privilege of many of you to make people stare this week, if you want to. You will surprise your family, your fellow-workmen, your friends. You can give the greatest sensation in all the circle of your acquaintance that it is possible to conceive, by ceasing to pray "Let us alone," and changing your prayer: "Lord, I would ever be with Thee. Thou are mine; I am Thine." That begins thy transformation of character and life, and may well make men wonder, for it is the miracle of Divine power. Nothing is so impossible as the turning towards God by an indifferent sinner. God only can do that; and, my dear friends, if He does it for you to-night, it is the manifestation of Divine Grace which alone is competent for that end.

Art thou answered, my indifferent hearer? Until thou believest, thy testimony is not needed. Claim Jesus Christ as thine own and then shalt thou gladly confess in thy life as well as by

thy lips His praise. He alone is worthy of thy service, for from heaven did He condescend to be the servant of all. Rejoice in His promises and pledge thyself to His government. I would have you men and women who have heard me through so many nights, to serve the Great One, the Mighty One—the Mightiest One. My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is that you may be saved to the service of the Mightiest. Did you ever hear the legend of St. Christopher? That tells the story. It is said that in Germany there was an old giant, whose name was Opher, the bearer. He was inspired to attach himself to the service of the mightest one in all the world. He knew of none greater than the Emperor, and he proposed himself to be his leigeman. He would serve the Emperor, who was the representative of all authority and dominion. The Emperor gave him a place next his own person as a guard, and they rode together, the Emperor and Opher, in all their journeys, until at last one day they were riding through a wood and came to a thick copse. The Emperor drew in his horse, and signed himself with the sign of the cross. Opher looked at him. "Ho! ho! my Lord Emperor, of what art thou afraid." The Emperor said, "I fear the devil. He dwells in this wood." "Ho! ho! then Opher will serve the devil! I will serve none but the mightiest." The legend says he plunged into the forest, seeking the Evil One, and came to a place where human bones were lying upon an altar and the evidences of cruelty all about him. There he met the one he sought, and asked him, "Who art thou?" "I am Satan." "Then I am thy true servant," said Opher. "I would serve the mightiest, and thou art mightier than my Lord Emperor." Satan accepted Opher to be his body-guard, and they started off through the forest, until, bye and bye, they came to a rising ground, upon which three crosses stood. Opher drew his bow and sent an arrow to the very centre of the middle cross. The devil turned aside to get beyond the gallows trees. "Ho! ho! my Lord Devil, of what art thou afraid?" "That is the cross of Mary's Son," said the devil. "Mary's Son. Who is Mary's Son, my Lord Devil?" "He conquered me." "Ho! ho! then there is one greater than thou, my Lord Devil. I will seek Mary's Son." He left the service of Satan, and, after much wanderings, found an old hermit who lived in a cave, to whom he told his perplexities. The hermit instructed him as to who was Mary's Son, and told him if he wanted to enter His service, to take up his abode beside a deep and rapid stream which ran near a chapel, there to carry upon his broad shoulders the pilgrims as they came to the water and could not pass over by themselves. So with his huge staff, trusty Opher, who would only serve the mightiest one, plodded, day after day, through the rocks and foaming stream,

bearing needy pilgrims for the sake of Mary's Son, whose service he had adopted. For years he continued faithful, until at last, in the silence of one night, he heard the voice of a child outside his hut: "Opher, good Opher." He started and seized his staff. Before him stood a beautiful child, an unearthly child, with long flaxen hair and sweet blue eyes, beaming with tenderness. "Opher, good Opher, bear me over the stream." He stooped for the child to find rest upon his back, and started on his journey—this oft-repeated journey of faith for Mary's Son. But as he stepped into the water the burden grew heavier upon his back. He bowed down wearily; he thought he should have fallen in the torrent, so weighty became his charge; and when he had reached the further bank, the child had become a man, marked with the signs of sorrow, yet majestic in his compassion, his tenderness and his power. Opher, with surprise, asked "Who art thou?" "Opher, I am Mary's Son;" and with water from the river He baptized him, and said "Henceforth thou shalt be called Christ-Opher, for thou art the Bearer of Christ."

God give you all grace to be Christ-Ophers—the servants not of my Lord Emperor, or my Lord Satan, but of the Mightiest One, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, whose name is Jesus. Amen.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE VALLEY OF DECISION.

SERMON BY THE REV. JOSEPH ODELL, OF THE PARK AVENUE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH, BROOKLYN, ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 11TH, 1876.

"Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision."—*Joel iii.*, 14.

With this word "valley," we have a crowd of thoughts at once interesting and instructive. We think of it *geographically*, and we regard it as the synonym of fertility, fragrance, beauty. We think of it *historically*, and we associate with it the tales of battles fought and lost and gained; of kings dethroned, empires destroyed, the boundaries of countries and peoples changed; of treaties signed, charters given and peace proclaimed. We think of the valley *scripturally*, and we see in it the type of humility; it forms the canvas upon which is sketched the stirring scenes of holy war; it is made the platform upon which the principles of good and evil are discussed; it is the arena of mysterious conflict, the ground upon which a vision of death is transformed into a scene of glorious life—the place where grace reigns and triumphs. Now, it is very difficult to decide positively upon the valley of this text. Some Biblical critics assure us that this valley is that of Jehosaphat, a very secluded and beautiful spot, protected on every side by towering hills and proudly rising rocks, and exhibiting a scene of natural grandeur almost without a rival. Here, the king's garden was kept and cultivated, and here many of those national reforms, so remarkable in Jewish history, had their origin. The name "*Decision*" here accorded to it, is understood to arise from the spirit of prophecy, and is given in anticipation of that period when the way-worn and weather-beaten Jew from every quarter of the globe shall repair to his long-lost land

and home, and the representatives of the nation shall gather, under the memory of punishment, incision, appeal and recovery; and here in this valley, full of their national reminders, they shall *decide* in favor of Christ—"shall look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn,"—while in penitence, prayer and vows they pledge themselves to the service and worship of our glorious Messiah. But as the language of the text is evidently highly figurative, there being no valley literally called "*Decision*," we certainly may be permitted to take the words of the text and employ them as a very apt figure for the happiest possible use; specially so may we venture to do this as we are certainly not bound to restrict the general figures of Scripture to one, and that the lowest meaning, but we should feel perfect liberty in working out and working up the words and symbols of the Book for the more attractive and emphatic teachings of the gospel, the most imperative claims for the Divine service, and the promotion of the highest glory of God. This text, therefore, comes to us and presents a glowing picture of the chief and superlative quality demanded at the very beginning of a godly life, and also of the commanding influence and vision that the gospel affords as witnessed in the "Multitudes in the valley of decision."

Sustaining the happy figure of the text, we shall now call your attention to THE NAME THIS VALLEY BEARS.

The name "*decision*" is very significant, and it is correct to employ it as applicable to the character of religion. If therefore this name is given to the valley, it must be so in opposition to the indifference and indecision so observable around; and in sustaining the symbol we state that this name distinguishes the valley from the outlying districts; beyond this vale of high and holy name there are districts covered with the ungodly and sinner. To-night you may clearly discern the plains of good desires—many are strolling here; the cloudy regions of unbelief, so shadowy and dark; the marshy grounds of drunkenness, where myriads sink to rise no more; the altitudes of self-righteousness, where shivering they stand; the cold hills of scepticism, where starving, shrivelled beings gaze and die; the wild cliffs of back sliding, where they stumble and pine and bleed away; and the burning table-lands of sinful pleasure, where moral fevers waste and burn. All these localities and out-lying districts are crowded with the unconverted, while here and there you may see the bleached bones and ghastly skulls of the victims of *indecision*. But, here in this valley of my text, so distinct in locality and so different in name, you can now command a beautiful, bright vision of a multitude all singing in response and testimony:

The ways of religion true pleasures afford,
There are no joys that can equal the joys of the Lord.

Again, the name this valley bears is derived from an event the most singular and unrivalled. Events do immortalize places; thus the pass of Thermopalye where Leonidas and his brave band so nobly fought and bled and fell; so the vale of Runnymede, where a papist king was compelled by the British barons to sign the Magna Charta; these events gave a lasting name and fame and glory to the localities; and it is from one glorious event that we obtain the name that shall give tone and effect, and immortality to this figurative vale. This event is "*decision for God*;"—thus the name is derived from a principle at work upon the human mind; the grace of God leads to *decision*; under the influence of the gracious Spirit so freely given in these last days a man may decide to be the Lord's, body and soul, for time and eternity. If this be the event, any local spot may become the valley and be immortalized by the deed; there in the lovely natural valley a man may wander and believe; in the mighty massive cathedral, where the choir sings and the organ rings, you may decide and be saved; in the cottage of the artisan decision can be formed, salvation found; in your own chamber, where you may have gone to rest many times without devotion or decision, there you may pray, believe, be saved; in this tent to-night, with all the attractiveness, and light, and music, and hope of this service, your anxiety may be augmented, your penitence intensified, your longings agonized, your prayers so pointed that your will shall be brought into complete *submission* to God and then into absolute *decision* for God.

So you observe, that while we try to localize the event and to the place afford the name, it is the event itself that we deem supremely desirable; it is the great event we long for; it is not places but deeds, that make a brilliant immortality! What is a valley—though the loveliest Eden ever seen, or a palace of unequalled splendour to an undecided, unconverted man? Oh! I claim the profoundest attention to this demand of decision for God! Such a deed shall immortalize this service under canvas; and though there be no tablet, no inscription to mark the spot where you decide; though this covering be but temporary, and the design and workmanship be unartistic; though no pilgrimages shall ever be taken by posterity to this sacred spot; *yet*, the angels of God as they take their splendid tour through immensity, their grand surveys of the universe, here they shall hover, and linger, and sing, and bending down in happy clusters to each other they shall say "this is the valley of decision;" "this man and that woman were born here;" then singing with spirit-music, they shall soar

away in search of other valleys—valleys with such happy memories and such splendid names.

Let me next ask your attention to THE WAY THIS VALLEY IS ENTERED.

The manner of this decision should be fully known; the entrance is by the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; there is but this single way in; every other pass is blocked up and defended by Justice. Jesus says: "I am the way." "I am the door." There is none other name or way given to us men and sinners; this door is available from each of those out-lying districts; you can all get down to the Cross, round to this Door, and up to God and glory by this Way; there are means employed to induce you to enter; they are various as agencies, but they all say "*Enter in!*" The pale looks of affliction turn that way; your sick friends would gladly follow you in; the ghastly hand of death points that way; many a dying one has tried to clutch the gate of happiness; the crowd of weeping penitents are marching that way; the throngs of new converts are calling out to you, "*Come in!*" The voices of God's servants from this desk, and the pleadings of the Holy Spirit, uniting cry, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

The valley entered, there are privileges and immunities to be enjoyed; there is the enjoyment of glorious life in this valley; to serve God is to live; religion is life! You have seen the exuberant life of the natural valley; there the water flows the freshest, the grass grows the greenest, the flowers appear the loveliest, the birds sing the sweetest, and all nature is the grandest. But, here in our valley, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." For, having decided for God and found Christ, the salubrious air of Eden in all its balmy freshness is upon us, the water of life flows near; music falls in soft and measured cadences upon the ear, and heaven itself bathes us in the valley. We have the privilege of the purest society; all the best of our race associate here; bright angels linger here. The triune God dwells here. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ;" if we walk in the light and live in the valley of light and glory, we shall have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. Here, the bridge of light is found across the stream of death; religion does not exempt us from death; the black flood flows here; along the back it winds; but, Christ has bridged the stream; we here find the bridge and see angels standing along the piers to light straight across. Here we discern the realms of bliss beyond; in this vale we have the scene

gradually growing clearer; the saints are singing now: "Yonder's my house and portion fair." "For me my elder brethren stay:" The canopy of the sky is lined with dear ones waiting for me.

"I come, I come, my soul replies,
I'm bound to meet you in the skies
And claim a mansion there."

Finally, this text is the language of one gazing upon a marvellous scene. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley." In our minds to-night we take a survey of God's work, and in view of the results of the services held here, the words of this text best describe our emotions; it is a vision of surprise at the numbers and characters that have been saved, of joy over such displays of saving grace, of faith that this is but the beginning of the work —the waving of the first fruits—the joy of harvest is coming. For the unsaved, it should, however, be a vision of solemn consideration. Many have entered, why am I still undecided? the door is open, why should I still tarry? I ought to decide; this night I will be saved.

"I will accept His offers now,
From every sin depart,
Perform my oft-repeated vow
And render Him my heart."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BURDEN IN WORD AND IN WEAR.

SERMON BY THE REV. JOSEPH ODELL, ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 18TH, 1876.

"The burden of the Word of the Lord."—*Zechariah xii.*, 1.

What wonderful men those ancient prophets were; how lonely, solemn, honest and fearless! God's men, possessing within them the inspiration of a Divine call, and hot with the action of a Divine fire, they went forth with commanding might and majesty to do God's work. As we read their prophecies in these distant days the men start up before our minds and seem to live again. There is Isaiah, grown snowy white with age. He has seen kings die; priests fall at the altar; people of two generations pass away; yet he appears to grow young with whitening years and freshens for his work with age, while in a foreign city and in the trials of captivity he moves from street to street, a grand example of open-air preaching, as with trumpet voice he tells the people of their sins, and points them to the coming Deliverer. There is Jeremiah also—that man of grief, that weeping seer; he grew so full of sorrow at the approaching doom of the people that he could not tell it all;—his preaching would have been choked by sighs and groans, so, taking a new parchment scroll, he writes God's message, and putting the ominous document under his arm, with downcast looks he ascends the temple steps and nails his message up; then with streaming eyes and breaking heart he returns in loneliness to his home, awaiting the judgments of his God. And Ezekiel too, he began his work in the morning of his days, yet how manly and mature he looks! he employs no half measures to convey God's truth; he is very practical withal; his faith is fully shown by his works, for having told his message, he moves all his goods from his house and then awaits in patience the visitation of the Lord. In this text Zechariah appears before us. The picture is a gloomy one; he has seen better days; when a

young man, he took part in those stirring scenes of the return from bondage and the rebuilding of the temple; he has now fallen on evil days, and in his old age too; for the people have forgotten their former mercies, they have deserted the temple and dishonored God. The good old man cannot endure this; the burden of the Lord rests heavily upon him; he cannot refrain; his summons to reform falls with threatening, ominous tones upon the people; the heads of the nation were alarmed, but the people generally were so persistent in their course, that rather than reform they mocked the messenger of God, and he, burdened with the word of the Lord, went sadly to his grave.

These were the men; they carried Divine truth with them; this gave them their burdens: nor does it reduce their lives as examples for us, to say they were supernaturally endowed; it was this endowment that made them strong to meet the flood-tide of evil and scale the mountain barriers of idolatry. God gave them their hope and proved Himself their amulet and glory.

The ministry of this day ought not to be regarded as so entirely dissimilar from those ancient prophets. Without the prophets' mien or garb, and without the prophets' miraculous power, we are, notwithstanding, called to as great a work; and we have certainly the greater opportunities and the greatest privileges; supported by the accumulated experiences of the past, sustained by the Holy Spirit of God, carrying the solemn saving message of the Lord, we should feel like men wrapt in garments of flame. Ours should be words that would flash as the lightning, roll as the thunder and distil as the dew, and invariably as we weep between the porch and the altar we also should feel the burden—"The burden of the Word of the Lord." Now, praying that this sense of responsibility may be mine; conscious of the presence of beings from other worlds to watch the issues of this service, and oppressed with the knowledge that the delivery of this Word may decide your position in the scale of moral, intelligent and saved beings for evermore, I present to you "the burden of the Word of the Lord."

We study the subject, first, as THE BURDEN IN WORD.

The word "burden" is of very simple and general application; it cannot well be misunderstood; it is often used by the prophets; the meaning there varies according to the relation the word sustains. For instance, the responsibility that the prophets felt in their reception of the Word from God, and their official obligations made a burden for them; the announcement and continued delivery of the Word was a very burdensome duty to them; the thought of the hardness and guiltiness of the people imposed a burden on them also; the people too had their burdens; the law of God, the repetition of warning, the demands of righteousness

the people so frequently regarded as burdens; the simple and faithful acceptance of the messages from God led to burdens of condemnation for past sins that none but God could remove; hence, it seems perfectly natural for us to read of the burden in word. To some, however, there may appear a strange paradox in the burden of a word. What can be lighter than a word? Words so quickly spoken and so soon forgotten; a word is but a vibration on the air, it may be but a simple sound,—an articulation; where can be the burden of this Word? Such, however, is but a partial view of the subject; even small words may impose great burdens; words have been uttered that have electrified the nations; seas have bent beneath the weight of navies, and the thunder of artillery and the clash of warlike implements have drowned the thunders of the skies, and all has started by a few short words. The message wired from the President of this great commonwealth to all the States might paralyze the country for a time; a few words,—just strokes of the pen from the Admiralty of Great Britain might close the naval yards of the country and desolate the homes of multitudes of families; a few words spoken in Berlin and repeated in Paris, gave us all the shocking scenes of the Franco-German war. If such may be the weight of words spoken by mortals, what must be the burden of the Word of the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible? We now present you *with a ponderous fact.* We have a Word from the Lord! There is no clear ground for doubt upon the subject. Our Bible has stood the test of logical, critical, sceptical and friendly investigation; fiendish malice from one side, and human experience on the other have heard this Word, and found it to be all-conquering,—all-Divine. It has taken a position in harmony with its claims, millions upon millions of our race keep it by them, carry it with them, love it and obey it as the Word of the Lord. It bears a likeness in harmony with its high claims; it is like its Author; the writing and the lines, the spirit and design of it prove it all-Divine. As one of the starry sons of science, discovering a new truth in astronomy, starting back from his table and looking reverently up to heaven, said, "My God, this is too beautiful not to be true;" so in the message of this book, the Word of the Lord—"it is too beautiful not to be true!" It assumes an authority equal to its claims. "Thus saith the Lord," is the herald that introduces all its solemn teachings; it is the voice of the great God and King of earth and heaven; it comes ringing down the starry steep above us and entering every attentive heart, it says: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." This being the truth relative to the authenticity and divinity of the Word, we must acknow-

ledge our tremendous obligations; we must give the most profound attention to its discoveries; it shows that men are all sinners; Christ the universal Redeemer; this life a preliminary, a margin only; death is a solemn frontier, and a deep blue eternity beyond the destiny of us all; it attests that we must give up sin, fly to Christ, accept His atonement, grasp the saving power of His grace, live holy by an in-dwelling Spirit, and die in the full triumph of faith, then rise to eternity's throne. We must most faithfully administer its teachings; as ministers of Christ a dispensation of the Gospel is given unto us. What a responsibility is ours to-night! "Son of Man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel. . . . . Thou shalt warn them from me, Oh, wicked man thou shalt surely die." What a work for mortals! Ruling empires is nought to this: not one solitary hearer present but must take an impression from this service that will never wear off: heaven and hell will forever ring with recited memorials of this service! "Oh Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the Word of the Lord." "Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." We must most promptly and fully obey this word—"Be ye doers of the Word." "To-day if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts." "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die." "Repent ye and be converted." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

Let me now speak, secondly, of the word of the Lord, as THE BURDEN IN WEAR. Having taught this Word, you have now to take the truth, to put it on, to wear it, to feel its weight as the prophets felt; no one can wear your burden; we, as preachers of the Word, may feel our own responsibility, but we cannot feel yours; we cannot repent for you, we cannot take the life-weights of piety and carry them for you. I pray that the blessed Spirit of God may fit the burden to every soul this night. You must feel first a burden of guilt. This Word charges you with a violation of God's law; guilty you stand; are you too hardened to feel your guilt and shame and condemnation? I pray you may feel heavily. Paul describes your very state when you begin to bow down under this burden: "Oh, wretched man that I am!" David said, "Mine iniquities have gone over my head, as a heavy burden; they are too heavy for me." The publican on the temple steps was so burdened that he could not raise his head or lift his eyes to heaven; this must first come upon the unconverted here. This is the weight, if not felt by the ungodly on earth, must weigh them down forever. Next, there must be a burden of grief. The weight of your guilt will draw open the weeping cross gate; sorrow for sin will make the tears flow; reflection of Jesus' love to a guilty sinner

will melt the heart; "they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn;" there shall be mourning apart, every family apart; the loneliness of heart-sorrow shall be felt; like the little boy of troubled heart, who wept when he thought of the Saviour's death for him, because he could not help it.

> With pleasing grief and mournful joy,
> My spirit next is filled
> That I should such a life destroy,
> Yet live by Him I killed.

Then must follow A BURDEN OF GRACE.

This is the result of transfer: you may lay your burden of guilt and grief down at the feet of Jesus and take up the burden of grace; your faith this moment may make the transfer. "I lay my sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God." Faith connects the sinner with the Saviour. Jesus now waits your act of transfer. The burden of grace is prepared for universal wear; all may bear it now and bear it gracefully; the religion of Christ is not a license, but a law—the law of love; grace is the ballast of the life; it is the burden and restraint of a willing service; "burdens of love are light." Jesus says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for My yoke is easy and My burden is light." This burden so light is also very enjoyable and beneficial, for David said, after his transfer: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth me with benefits, even the God of my salvation." This burden is available for all; there is no difficulty in the way; you may all put it on and wear it as your protection and beauty.

Finally, there shall be A BURDEN OF GLORY.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." A weight of glory then! Of this burden we cannot fully speak; but we know that, as in the universe of law, there is a principle called gravitation, a subtle, mysterious power that draws all bodies and keeps an infallible balance from the centre; so this "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," by a mysterious, majestic power, is drawing our souls upward; the burden of grace and the burden of glory have a secret affinity to each other; but there is more weight above and so we rise; the world recedes, it disappears; heaven opens to our view; sounds seraphic fall upon our ears, and we pass home to the centre of light and life, evermore to live upon the golden glory that comes from the Word of the Lord.

In conclusion. I plead with you to believe this Word and accept the burdens it imposes. May the Lord help you. Amen.

CHAPTER XV.

VALUE OF A SOUL.

SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM S. RAINSFORD, B.A., (OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND,) ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 1876.

A tendency exists in us all to accept the privileges that flow from our union with Christ, and shirk the responsibilities consequent on that union. I need scarcely remind you that true conversion to God alters the motives and cause of Christian working from a *legal* motive to a *loving* motive, so that work before undertaken as a duty, becomes a labor of love.

But true conversion must be followed not only by a change in our reasons for work, but a change in our desire for work. We can no longer stand all the day idle. Jesus has hired us and over our redeemed shoulders cast the sweet, light yoke of His love, so that our experience daily reveals to ourselves and the world the fact *that grace creates effort and does not supercede it.*

I believe that God applies one test to all Christian work, and only one,—that is, its *success in winning souls.* Now here, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I hear some poor child of God say, "Ah well, then indeed my place in the glory will be a low one, and my reward small. I cannot say I have won many souls, may be not one. How I wish I was like some great preacher, to whom thousands trace their conversion." Yes, I know men talk thus, but they make a mistake, and a great one. I confess I feel very strongly, when I hear some one say "Ah, Mr. So-and-So, he has won hundreds of souls, far more than Mr. So-and-So." I say again, who can tell? What man can step in and award what the great Judge of the universe claims as His sole prerogative—"*the day*" shall declare it—and till that searching day come, "when every man's work shall be tried, what sort it is," "and the hidden counsels of man's heart shall be manifested," let us leave awards

alone, remembering that it shall witness the complete reversal of all human judgment, "for the last shall be first, and the first last."

But for this matter of winning souls, let me make my meaning plain by means of an illustration. Some weeks back, near Lake Erie, a farmer took me into his field to see a new reaping machine at work, and explained to me, with pride, that it would cut fifteen acres a day. Now, suppose that when the sheaves of those acres lay cut and ready to be carried away, the hired laborer who cut them with the machine, had brought his wagon and carted them all to his own home, and claimed the harvest because he had cut it! What, do you think, would my friend, the farmer, have had to say to him? Nay; it was his land, his seed, his machine, his harvest; and as to the laborer, true, he had cut it down, but what of that? How many others had a hand in the production of the golden grain? Long months back, in the cold and wet, a man had ploughed the land; then came another, who sowed the good seed; then, as Spring came on, (if it's the same as in my country,) there came a little boy, and day after day did his work of scaring the crows away. Then it had to be weeded, and many other workers employed before the sheaves made glad the farmer's heart. And do you think the reaper, coming in a day, going in a day, cutting down fifteen whole acres in a day, shall have all the credit? I say, when the King distributes the awards of Eternity among His army, He won't forget one who had but a little part in raising that harvest that is to satisfy Him for the *travail* of His soul; no, not even the little boy that scared the crows shall be forgotten.

I was sitting once at breakfast with a company of earnest working Christians, and this subject of the seemingly comparative success of some and failure of others in winning souls, came up. I said, that it seemed to me not so much a question of *how many* souls *one man* saved, but how *many men* were employed in winning *one soul*; and I found out, long after, that God had used that simple word to comfort much, one weary working servant there.

I firmly believe some of the most successful soul-winners are unknown to the church on earth; yet the beds of sickness, or the limited and unnoticed spheres where they are called on to labor, are the battle-fields where great and lasting triumphs—armies of saved souls—are won for God.

Winning souls is laborious work. I find it compared not only to the varied toil of the husbandman, but to the life of the fisherman, full of privation. His work necessitates constant activity, early and late; when others are enjoying repose he must rise; when others seek shelter from the storm, he must face it—not always in the calm you catch fish. I have seen our herring fisher-

men, on the east coast of England, holding on to their nets in the wildest storm, while battered ships and diminished numbers in the morning, would bear sad testimony to the terrible dangers of the work. Oh, brothers and sisters in Christ, we are all fishermen, floating for a short day on a changeful sea, surrounded by dying men; every hour, if our eyes are open, wrecks float past us, from which we may save some. But, it's not child's play, this saving—this *winning souls;* we must be *laborers.* Not looking at the work as many do—in the light of a pastime—which we can undertake as an amateur painter does the profession of painting—to wile away time—but as the work, the aim, the purpose of our lives; *the* ONE *thing in which if we fail, we shall feel the failure throughout all eternity.*

Go, labor on; spend, and be spent,
Thy joy to do thy Father's will,
It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?

Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice;
For toil, comes rest,—for exile, Home;
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's voice,
The midnight cry, behold, I come!

I have looked at the salvation of a soul as the great object of the church of Christ's work here. This indicates its value. But more than this. I see the value of a soul by the relation God enters into with regard to it. He never sought a kingdom—never looked for man's praise or honor. But He who was the form of God, who thought it not a thing to be grasped at (since it was already His) to be equal with God—made Himself of no reputation; took the form of a servant; was made in the likeness of man—yet, wonder of wonders, the scale still descends, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death—even the death of the cross. *All to seek lost souls. What must be the value of a soul?*

The devil never seeks earthly honors that I read of. He knows their emptiness; but he goeth about as a roaring lion seeking to devour souls. *What must be the value of a soul?*

See what a soul is capable of? These bodies we value so highly are not capable of much; they soon wear out, becoming as an old garment, torn, threadbare, moth-eaten: yes, soon I must lay the garment of this body aside. But then the soul shall have lost none of its vigor; but, free from the body's restraint, as it were, renews its youth.

I open this book of God. I see He who made this soul of mine sets a value on it. He says He intends it for an Eternal crown—a glorious Kingdom, out-lasting Eternity. Nay, more than this. It is to be fitted for the company of God Himself—

and in me He finds that which nothing else created can give Him—*a companion.*

What, oh, what, must be the value of a soul?

Surely he that winneth souls is wise. I come back to that word with which I started, "*win.*" It is a sweet, a suggestive one. I read of winning a battle—and the word implies struggle fierce, deadly and exhausting—so bitter that the conquerers are hailed by friends and country as heroes to be loved and honored. Yes, souls must be won in battles long and fierce. Here the armies for and against Christ are *real;* battles *real;* death and life *real;* a *real* armor, needed to guard against a real danger. Here a man cannot saunter on in dressing-gown and slippers, for souls must BE WON.

We speak of winning a race, and if any of you have ever taken part in a race or races as I have, you will bear me witness it is no child's play—more than passing enthusiasm is necessary to success. Self-denial has its place, training *its* place, and last but not least, going on when you are tired—*Thus we must win souls.*

But there is one more common use of the word. I suppose in this latter connection it is employed more frequently than in all the others—*win love.* A man wins his bride; sometimes slowly and by almost imperceptible degrees he attaches her love to himself, till at length she confesses it, is won, and proves her love by a willing self-surrender. God teach us each *thus* to win souls. It needs perseverance, long and sorely tried—but love suffereth long, and is kind. It needs Divine *tact*; the wisdom that cometh down from above. Oh, it needs holy directness of aim, a directness that will not suffer itself to be diverted from its object by anything. God teach us to cast ourselves into the work of winning souls, as a man sets himself to win the love of a woman who commands his heart. I speak it with reverence: *Let us learn to make love to souls for Jesus.*

This is a great subject, dear friends, and a man soon loses himself in its vastness. There are many things connected with soul-winning, I should like to speak about had I time, but there is one difficulty that seems to lie on the very threshold of our purpose to do God's will and obey His voice, in yielding ourselves more completely to Him for the blessed work. Here is an opportunity occurring to win a soul—it comes on me suddenly. In the daily routine of life, in business, in a railway car, some one is thrown across my path—he may not know Jesus—this soul may not be won. Shall I speak to him, *loving* and *gently*? *Yes, I ought*—my conscience tells me that, and if I don't, when the precious opportunity is past I will be sorry for it. But then I don't *feel up to it.* Has not that foolish thought often staggered

you?—it has me. I don't feel as if I could say anything; my heart is not burning with love—and so on.

I heard a story once, of a young preacher speaking to a large congregation in England. He did not seem to himself to get on at all; the thoughts would not come, and when they did, why then the words wouldn't, and when he got through, he said to one of the old elders that he felt he had made a mess of it. The old man said, "God gave Gideon two signs, didn't He? Yes, at one time a wet fleece, and the ground all dry; at another, the ground all wet and the fleece only dry;" then he kindly added "would you not rather, dear young brother, be the dry fleece if the surrounding ground be all refreshed, than be refreshed yourself while all around you be dry?"

Ah, yes, friends, we don't walk by feeling, nor yet by sight, but faith. God does not need your refreshment, but He does want others to be refreshed by you, and when you feel dry as an old bone, you are probably doing it.

But now I must say a word to those who, in spite of God's prolonged entreaty, beginning almost at their cradle, and continued till to-day, are still unsaved, unwon. How shall any poor words that my tongue can frame, convince of this deadly life-long mistake—this real risk you persist in running of eternal damnation. Has that unanswered question of Jesus no weight with you? "What shall it *profit* a man if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" *What should it profit in death? What should it profit in judgment? What should it profit in hell?* You are, many of you, occupied several hours of the day considering questions of *profit*; consider this question of PROFIT now.

You have a house. It may be burned; it may be wrecked to-night. A few years your lease will have expired and you must part with it; or, before that comes, they may carry you from its doors, and it parts with you, but the possession of that *house* cost some of you far more careful thought, more consideration, than your immortal soul. Yes; you took pains to make sure that your title to that bit of ground, 30 feet x 100, and the stones and mortar erected on it, was good; that you had security for it, while for a soul, vast as eternity itself, at this moment you have *no security whatever—none, absolutely none!*

Oh man, think on the value of thy soul! Many bitter tears have been shed over lost wealth—but it may be regained.

Sad to see a man lose health, but, blessed be God, there is a land where they never say, I am sick—there he may bid good-bye to pain.

Sadder still to see a lost reputation—but even for this there is a solace—since JESUS RECEIVES A MAN WITHOUT ANY REPUTATION.

But if a man dies without Christ, ah, then indeed, I can find

no ground of comfort, no vestige of hope. Now the saltest tear you can shed is none too bitter. *You stand by the grave of a lost soul!*

Oh man, may *the present* Spirit of God make this truth real to you now. You see a boy swing a stone round his head in a sling —thy soul is as that stone—the moment that frail thread of life snaps, forth flies thy soul—BUT WHERE? WHERE?

I was walking down the street of a large town in the east of England lately, my thoughts running on the subject I have tried to speak to you to-night about, when my eye caught sight of a notice in an adjoining shop window—"*Good workmen wanted.*" Ah, thought, I, our Lord Jesus seems to put up another and say "*Good workmen wanted*;" men wise in counsel, warm of heart, strong of body, the best of earth's intellect; men who will sanctify wisdom, opportunity, gifts, wealth, all! all! for Jesus and the souls of men.

I passed on, and in another window saw "*Women and girls wanted*," and so I again thought our Jesus in His great harvest field needs help of all. Oh, women, good, pure, loving women, Jesus needs you. He accepted woman's service when on earth, He demands it now. His members weak, sin-smitten, helpless, shuddering under the shadow of death, still remain here. Any service done to them, He enters it as done to Himself. Won't you do your great part in *winning*, as you only can *win*, perishing souls?

And yet one more notice I saw at the foot of the street. "*Good workmen wanted. None but good workmen need apply.*" Ah thought I then, Jesus never said any such thing as that. He takes them bad and good, all who come; they may have only a few years, the tail end of a mis-spent life to give. He won't turn them back. And if they don't know the trade at all, why even then He bids them welcome, and under His teaching they soon will learn. Yes "*Somebody wanted*," that is the cry. Somebody wanted—to be a fellow-worker with the Eternal God, in saving His fellows; somebody wanted who will make all things second to this great thing. May each from his very heart say:—Here am I, Oh Lord, teach, and send me.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW TO PLEASE GOD

SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM HUMPSTONE, ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 1876.

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."—*Heb. xi.*, 6.

That it is possible to please God, and also to know when we do so, the context fully declares; for by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him, for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

If we imitate Enoch in faith and obedience, we shall please God, and be conscious that we do so. That it is the imperative duty of all men to please God will appear from the following considerations: God is our Father, for Scripture tells us that He is the Father of the spirits of all men; and what right-minded father is there who does not expect his children to do what will please him? God is our Master; for the Scriptures teach that He is the Master of all men; and what master does not expect his servants to please him? God is a Sovereign; for He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and what sovereign does not expect his subjects to please him by obedience to his laws? But though it is the imperative duty of all men to please God, yet, how many are living as if there were no God, and they had no one to please but themselves? Yet, such never satisfactorily please themselves, because they will not do what will please God. Even amongst those whose souls have been quickened by the Holy Spirit, and whose consciences have been aroused, how few really succeed in pleasing God, because they do not begin in the right way? One man thinks he can please God by giving largely of his substance for

charitable and religious purposes, while he is living in sin. Though he ought to give his money for charitable and religious purposes, he should remember that he is only a steward of God's wealth, and that the right discharge of one duty can never atone for the neglect of another. The apostle affirms,—"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." And what is charity? The word in the original, signifies *love*—the love of God which is shed abroad in the heart of every believer, by the Holy Ghost. Then, where there is no holy love, there is no faith; and without faith it is impossible to please God. Another man thinks he can please God by speaking well of religion and of religious people, and by speaking reverently and eloquently of God's Word. Men ought to speak well of whatever is good; and speak reverently of God, and dispense God's Word in the best possible manner. Yet it is written,—"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Moreover, a very large class of persons seem to think that they can please God by simply giving attention to religious ordinances, such as reading the Bible, saying or reading their prayers, being baptized, uniting with the Church and receiving the Lord's Supper. Though these things are right, we should remember that they are but means to an end, and that faith in God is the very beginning of a life of godliness; and that whatever we are, and whatever we do, without faith it is impossible to please God. We may be very learned, or very illiterate; we may be very kind and very polite, and do much that the world admires, but we can never please God without true faith in Him.

That we may have clear views on this important subject, and know whether we possess what is so pleasing to God, we proceed to answer the question,—"*What is Faith?*"

It has been said that faith is taking God at His word. But this is not a complete definition. True faith is not a mere sentiment, but a principle, that leads to holy action; it is related to the intellect, but specially to the affections; for, with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. True faith is taking God at His word *and* doing what He commands. Numerous Scriptures show the connection between faith and corresponding works. St. Paul says: "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."

From the chapter containing our text we learn that by faith, Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. How did Noah build an ark by faith? God said

unto Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood . . . . And behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven, and everything that is within the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish My covenant; and thou shall come into the ark, thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee." Noah believed God—took God at His word—but did not rest there, fold his arms and rejoice that God would destroy the earth, but would save him and his house. Had he acted thus he would have been drowned. Therefore, believing what God had said, he began to do just what God commanded. When the ark was finished Noah entered into it with his family and waited for the fulfilment of God's word. When God had shut the door of the ark the clouds gathered, the lightning flashed, the thunder roared, the rain descended, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, the antidiluvians were drowned. But Noah's confidence in God and accompanying obedience saved his house and condemned the world, and he became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. Moreover, by faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days. How by faith? The king of Jericho had heard that the children of Israel were to pass through Jericho, and of the terrible devastation that had followed in their train; how for their sakes God had subdued kingdoms and destroyed kings. Being afraid, the king determined that the children of Israel should not pass through Jericho. The city being fortified with high and massive walls, he ordered the gates to be closed. On reaching the city, Joshua, the commander of Israel, saw a man standing with a drawn sword in his hand, and, walking up to him he said: "Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, nay, but as captain or prince of the host of the Lord am I now come. Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship, and said unto him, what saith my Lord unto thy servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy; and Joshua did so. And the Lord said unto Joshua, see, I have given into thine hand Jericho and the king thereof, and the mighty men of power, and ye shall compass the city. All ye men of war go around about the city once; thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of ram's horns; and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets and it shall come to pass that when they make a long blow with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the

sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout and the wall of the city shall fall down flat; and the people shall ascend up, everyone straight before him." Joshua, believing what God said, did as He had commanded. Now, there can be no doubt that the people of Jericho and their king rejoiced greatly that they lived in a fortified city, and were able to keep out the invaders. But when the children of Israel had compassed the seventh time, and the priests had blown the great blasts of their trumpets, Joshua cried unto all the people, "shout, for the Lord hath given us the city;" and down went the walls of Jericho; and the people of God entered into the city. Thus, by faith in connection with obedience, did the walls of Jericho fall.

But while true faith is a motive power, inciting to holy action, it is also a revealing medium, making the past and future present, and bringing what is distant nigh. Faith is the ground, or confidence of things hoped for, the assurance of things not seen; and when exercised, the clouds disperse, the shadows fly, what is invisible appears, and God is seen. Though Christ had ascended to heaven, alluding to what faith accomplishes, St. Paul says, "*We see Jesus.*" Believing, they beheld the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

Faith being to the mind what eyes are to the body, by it we look back to the stable in Bethlehem, and see Jesus lying in a manger; the wise men from the east paying Him homage by presenting gifts of gold and of frankincense and myrrh. By faith, we see Jesus in the temple, when but twelve years old, asking questions and giving answers that astonished the learned doctors. By faith, we see Jesus at the age of 30 baptised by John in the river Jordon. By faith, we see the heavens opened and hear the voice of God saying: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." By faith, we see Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, in an agony of soul, praying and sweating as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. By faith, we see the cross placed upon His lacerated back, that He may bear it to the place of execution. By faith, we see Him secured to the cross by nails driven through His hands and feet, and extended between heaven and earth, between two thieves, as though He were the vilest of the three. By faith, we hear the grandest cry the world ever heard, "It is finished!" By faith, we see Him when dead, taken down from the cross and laid in the sepulchre. By faith, we see Him rise again and show Himself openly by many infallible proofs to chosen witnesses. By faith, we see Him lead His disciples to a mountain in Galilee, and having given them His last great commission to evangelize the world, we see Him ascend into heaven and sit down at the right hand of the throne of God until His enemies become His foot-stool. By

faith, we see God the Judge of all, and Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and the spirits of the just made perfect, with all the holy angels.

By faith we see the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem, the walls of jasper, the streets of gold, and the city of our God, which is to be the everlasting home of all the saints. By faith we look down into that infernal world, which in the Bible is called hell, which is the everlasting home of the devil and all his angels, and of every finally impenitent son and daughter of Adam; where there is anguish, and weeping and wailing, that cannot be described. O! sirs, this is the everlasting punishment that awaits all those who die in unbelief. Children of pious parents, do you wonder why they are so much more anxious for your salvation than you are to be saved? It is because they see the glorious heaven which you are likely to lose, and the terrible hell into which you are likely to fall, and the terrible torments you must eternally endure. People of the world, do you wonder at the anxiety of pious ministers on your account? It is because they see the punishment awaiting you, and are anxious to pluck you as brands from the burning. How could it be otherwise, when the spiritual things, which they see by faith, are real and eternal; while the things which you see and upon which you have set your affections, are but temporal and must soon pass away?

But faith is not only a principle inciting to righteous action, and a principle or medium of light, it is also a principle from which emanates holy love. Faith works by love, and purifies the heart. By faith we see that God so loved us that he incarnated Himself to suffer in our stead, that we might not suffer eternal fire. And beholding the manner of love which the Father hath bestowed upon us, we love Him, who has so loved us as to give His only begotten Son to be the propitiation of our sins; and loving Him, we also love those who are begotten of Him; for by this all men know that they are the sons of God when they have love one for another. For, how can we love God, whom we have not seen, if we do not love our brethren, whom we do see? Remember, dear friends, that there are two things in the text to be believed, and the first is the existence of God; for he that cometh unto Him must believe that He is. Oh, sirs, you will never come to God until you have settled convictions of His existence. Do you ask how can I have this faith? God answers, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and behold the moon and the stars, which are the works of My hands." See there worlds revolving around worlds with a velocity of speed which almost baffles computation, and then ask yourselves "Is there no God?" Then turn to His Book and read, "The heavens declare the glory of God." By

the things which He has made, He has declared His eternal power and God-head. And then take your stand on the sea-shore, and behold there water enough to drown the whole world, staying in its own place, with no bound but God's decree, who has said, "Here shalt thou come, but no farther, and there shall thy proud waves be stayed."

Beloved, a just consideration of these truths will lead you into a settled conviction of God's eternal existence. And seeing that there is a God, you will feel that He is holy, and that you are unholy; and feel also as the apostle felt when he said, "Vile man, that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" As the prophet felt, when he said, "Woe is me, for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people with unclean lips." As the Jews felt on the day of Pentecost, when they cried unto the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And also, as the Philippian jailer tremblingly felt when he cried, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" If you thus realize your sinfulness and helplessness, you are prepared for the second truth to be believed on: "That God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." It will not be necessary to tell you to seek the Lord, for the anguish of your broken heart will be, "Oh, where shall I find Him whom my soul desires to love." This faith will move you towards God with a penitent heart. It may be tremblingly, at first, but you will soon experience that He is ready to forgive and mighty to save. You will then feel as the Psalmist did, when he said "Who have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides Thee." And with Isaiah, you will say "O, Lord, I will praise Thee; for though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and behold, Thou comfortest me."

In conclusion:—

Oh, believe the record true,—
God, to you, His Son has given,
You may now be happy too,
Live on earth the life of heaven.

CHAPTER XVII.

CHRIST'S APPEAL FOR ADMISSION.

SERMON BY REV. J. W. BONHAM, CHURCH EVANGELIST, ON MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 1876.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man will hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."—*Rev. iii.*, 20.

Some of the most precious truths of the gospel are contained in the Book of Revelation, which commences with the sublime announcement, "The *revelation* of Jesus Christ." In the gospels we read of the Saviour's sufferings and sin-atoning death. In the Book of Revelation, we read of the Saviour's glorious triumphs, and of Satan's dethronement.

Our text, which was addressed to the lapsed members of the church in Laodicea, is the gospel intensified and its terms reversed. For though we should seek Christ, He seeks us! Though we should seek Christ's banquet, He seeks ours! Though we should beseech Him, He implores us! And, while there is no essential difference between our going to Christ for mercy and Christ coming to us with mercy, or, between the Saviour inviting and the Saviour knocking, yet, the contrast developed by our text shows that the Saviour not only calls after us, saying, "Come unto Me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," but also comes after us like the good Shepherd seeking lost and wandering sheep.

Though the sinner is exposed to the broken laws' penalty, the Saviour's knock at his affections is not the knock of Jehovah's Justice, appalling the soul with terror, but the knock of Sovereign mercy. That the knock might neither awe nor frighten, it is accompanied by a gracious voice virtually saying: See! Look! Give attention! I, who am the High and lofty One, and yet your

Redeemer! I, not a minister of wrath, but the crucified, risen, and interceding Saviour, "behold, *I* stand at the door and knock."

In the home of a devoted Christian, in Oxford, England, I saw the original painting by the renowned artist, Holman Hunt, entitled "The Light of the World." The picture represents the Saviour knocking at a door with one hand, and in the other holding a lamp that lightens up the darkness. Tangled weeds twine around the threshold of the door-way at which Christ stands and listens for an answer to His gracious knock. Moonbeams flicker through the waving branches overhead, and shine upon His thorn-crowned brow and oriental robe. The attitude and anxious look of holy love make the picture speak, saying, open now the door and receive great riches. In tones of wondrous love, the Saviour is now pleading for admission at your bolted heart; and the sentence "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" may be interpreted to denote *God's providential dealings to allure you to set your affection on things above.* To reveal to you the transient nature of the things of earth, God gave wings to your riches and frustrated your cherished plans. That freezing touch of disappointment was a providential knock, warning you that the things which are seen are temporal; that we brought nothing into this world, neither may we carry anything out.

At your door Christ knocked when you stood by the bedside of your dying mother. Anxious for your eternal welfare, and yearning for your salvation, she said, "*O, do love the precious Saviour and meet me in heaven.*" This was her last appeal, and you heard her desire for your welfare in faltering accents of love struggling in death. You felt the farewell but thrilling pressure of her hand, and saw her once beaming eyes closed in death. Surely, that solemn parting scene was a providential visitation to *arouse* you to a sense of your condition, and to prevail on you to follow in the footsteps of your devoted mother, and to fulfill her desire—"*Meet me in heaven!*"

At your door the Saviour knocked when you lost that beloved child, whose prattling tongue charmed you, and whose cheerful presence gladdened all around. He who said "Suffer the little children to come unto Me," took to Himself the darling of your heart to allure your thoughts heavenward. And as "the harp of heaven had lacked its least, but not its meanest strings had children not been taught to play upon it," your beloved child was borne by angels to the company of celestial harpers. You viewed this bereavement as a judgment. Your heart almost rebelled. You did not say "Thy will, O God, be done." You did not sing:

> God gave, God took, God will restore;
> He doeth *all* things well.

Because thou wast unprepared to die, God, in mercy, called thy child instead of calling thee. To arrest thee in thy course and draw thy thoughts above, He took to Himself the darling of thine heart. And as you think of that lovely flower, transplanted to the Paradise of God, forget not that His providential knock was a knock of love, to draw your thoughts to the celestial garden above, where your transplanted flower shall bud and bloom in the radiance of heaven for ever and ever.

But while Mercy has knocked at some doors by adversity, He is knocking at other doors by prosperity. While others have been tossed on the sea of sorrow, you have sailed calmly and enjoyed constant sunshine. But though you are indebted to God for every good and perfect gift, you have not said, "Take my poor heart and make it Thine abode." Now, as your heart will soon be pierced by affliction, and the cup of sorrow be placed to your lips, that you may then enjoy the consolations of the gospel and cast your burden on the Lord, Christ says: "Behold, I stand at *your* door and knock; for in the world ye shall have tribulation, but in Me you may find peace."

But while God's providential dealings may be denoted by the declaration, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," His gracious voice may denote *the means provided to bring salvation.* When the sceptre of the universe was placed in the risen Saviour's hands, He commissioned His ministers to preach the gospel to every creature. And Christ knocks at the heart by the proclamation of the gospel, assuring the sinner that Christ is able to save to the uttermost, or completely and eternally; that those who come unto Him He will in *no-wise* cast out; and that whosoever will may take of the water of life *freely!* Because Christ's ambassadors love your souls, they beseech you to be reconciled to God; plead with you to withdraw the bolts of spiritual ignorance, and of love for things that perish, and of reigning sin; urge you to pray "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me"; and implore you to unlock the door of your cell of condemnation by the key of faith in Christ's atoning blood. To avoid placing you in the condition of one slumbering soundly while his house is in flames, God's ministers warn with pathos and plead with earnestness, and obey the inspired mandate, "Cry aloud and spare not, and lift up thy voice like a trumpet."

Christ also pleads for admission to the heart through the voice of conscience. Though conscience is not an infallible guide, because impaired through sin, it still proclaims that God's laws ought to be obeyed, His name honored, and His Son received. It also whispers that the Bible is of celestial origin, and, therefore, true, though you cannot answer its objections,

disperse its difficulties, nor solve its mysteries. Those who reject revelation, because of its mysteries, have been requested to explain the structure of the human eye and the philosophy of seeing; the mysterious union between body and soul; the connection between the decisions of the mind and the obedient actions of the body; the wonderful analogy between the sounds of the voice and the thoughts of the mind. Surely there is a little mystery connected with the variations in sounds perfectly representing what the mind thinks. As I now speak the atmosphere vibrates my thoughts and brings our minds into mysterious communion. As much really exists that man cannot explain, while man cannot solve all the mysteries clustering around inspiration and revelation, yet an inspired revelation of God's will exists, and its truths knock at the heart, urging you to be reconciled to God.

The voice of conscience re-echoes the precepts, promises, warnings and threatenings of God's holy Word. Though you may deny your conscience by doubting what you hope may not be true, and deafen its voice by constant sinning, yet you cannot obliterate nor dethrone it. Why do the guilty flee when no man pursueth? Why does the burglar start at the sound of his own footstep? Why do undetected transgressors deliver themselves up to the officers of justice? Why do hearers insist that the minister is personal, that he has learned of their secret doings and is preaching at them? Why does the sinner in Zion hear a voice within louder than the preacher's voice, saying "that duty *thou* hast neglected and that sin *thou* hast committed?" Should you now bid conscience slumber when the cry shall be heard "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," it will be startled by the crash of dissolving humanity and fiercely upbraid you that when the Saviour knocked, you would not admit Him. But while Christ's ambassadors beseech you to be reconciled to God, and to love Him because He first loved you, and conscience re-echoes the warnings of justice and the pleadings of mercy, Christ's desire to save you has been whispered by the voice of the Holy Spirit. God planned the atonement that the Saviour achieved, and the Holy Ghost prepares the heart for its reception and applies all its benefits. The Holy Spirit who strives, warns, enlightens, convicts, allures and comforts, has striven with you to turn from Satan unto God, and accept the eternal life that is in His Son. If you will now listen to the Spirit's wooing voice, He will impart life and holy energy, and help your infirmities, and though His action will be invisible as the wind making the tree branches wave, and wafting the fragrance of flowers, the effects will be apparent. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Yield thou to the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and behold what He reveals, and obey Christ's voice, and you will know experimentally what is meant by the declaration, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Enthrone thou the Saviour, and the Holy Ghost will apply the benefits flowing from Christ's atonement, the pardon of all sin, the impartation of peace that passeth understanding, the assurance of acquittal at the judgment seat, and a welcome to a sinless, sorrowless and eternal home, where every eye is tearless, and bright with holy rapture, where every heart is sorrowless, and thrills with holy joy, where every voice is joyful, and sings with holy ecstacy, where all unite in the oratorio of the ransomed, striking golden harps, and where all gladly sing "Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be praise and dominion forever and ever."

The Instruction.

Because we cannot save ourselves, nor remove our guilt, nor purchase pardon, and each needs a Saviour able to save from the guilt and power and penalty of sin, the Saviour who is mighty to save, has proved His willingness to save by drawing very near. But, though He knocks at the heart by blessings, afflictions, and all the means of grace, and assures that He designs to bless and not to curse, yet by multitudes His knock and voice are disregarded. And while a life-long gratitude is felt for a benefactor who has considered our individual case with special care, and made provision for needful wants, the Saviour, who knocks at the heart with one hand, and in the other holds unsearchable riches, is treated with indifference, and allowed to wander from door to door, as a homeless stranger! The door of the affections is opened wide to welcome the world and the flesh and the devil, but is closed and barred against Christ and holiness and heaven! Though He has provided salvation for the world, through the world He is allowed to wander as the rejected Saviour, saying, "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life."

Christ is present here, knocking—*knocking*. He is at your door, waiting—*waiting*. You have turned a deaf ear to His previous providential knocks; but, He now, in mercy, knocks again. You have refused to listen to His voice of holy love; but in love-tones He speaks once more. If you admit Him, saying, "Come in, celestial Guest, come in," all the riches of His grace are yours; but if you reject Him, yours will be eternal banishment. And should you be numbered with the lost, you will be stung by the conviction that you are self-ruined. It is affirmed that there is not a soul among the lost to whom Christ has not said, "Listen to Me, and it shall be well with thee." There is not a soul among

them who has not turned away, and said, "I will not listen to Thee; I will not obey Thee."

Before you reach that dread abode, I call heaven and earth to witness that all the means of salvation have been brought to you, and mercy placed within your reach. You have repeatedly heard that God loves *you;* that Christ died for *you;* that the Holy Ghost wants to comfort *you.* But because you have despised God's love, rejected His Son, and resisted the Holy Spirit, great is your danger, and very great your condemnation. If lost through keeping your heart barred against the only Saviour, instead of singing the *Gloria Patri* in heaven you will lament in hell that though ruined forever, you destroyed yourself. But though your sun is setting, and the shadows of night are gathering, and your day of mercy is fast drawing to a close, we rejoice that you have not quite crossed the boundary of your short probation. As the door of mercy is not yet closed, I implore you to refuse no longer to listen to God's voice of love; refuse no longer the merciful Saviour; resist no longer the gracious strivings of the Holy Spirit; for it may be *now* or NEVER!

With glories on His brow, compassion in His eyes, celestial music in His voice, and eternal riches in His hand, the heavenly Suppliant now offers pardon for all your guilt, consolation for all your grief, and everlasting friendship. If you admit Him, saying,

> **Take my poor heart, and let it be**
> **Forever closed to all but Thee,**

when you shall again hear the voice of an afflictive Providence, you will see the word *love* inscribed on every trial; and will not mourn as those without hope, when death shall take your friends beloved. Welcome now the Saviour, and henceforth His ministers will comfort you with the assurance that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; that all the awful threatenings are hushed forever, and that yours are all the promises. Encircled by the attributes of the Lord Jehovah, Satan cannot overthrow you. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, cannot separate the believer from the love of Christ, who now stands and knocks.

Admit now the Saviour, and henceforth His holy Word will be sweeter to your soul than honey in the comb; it will be a light to your feet, and a lamp to your path; it will reveal the rich fruit of the tree of life hanging over your pathway, and the pure streams of the water of life flowing past your feet; in it you will find joy for every grief, comfort for every sorrow, and hope for every fear; it will be the powerful telescope through which, by the eye of faith, you may gaze at heaven's glories, see the

enthroned King, the sinless, tearless, sorrowless and deathless inhabitants, and obtain foretastes of the joys of fruition.

Enthrone now the knocking and supplicating Saviour, and henceforth the scorpion sting of sin will no longer burn thy conscience. Instead of arraigning, convicting and condemning, Christ having satisfied for thee all the claims of the broken law, conscience will be hushed into calm repose. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Accept now the freedom from condemnation offered by the Saviour, and henceforth the Holy Spirit will impart joy and gladness. With the film removed from your eyes, and the guilt taken from your heart, you will not dread the Father's righteousness, nor fear His justice, nor be afraid to meet His Son when He shall appear in glory to summon the world to judgment. The illumining and purifying Spirit will be your Comforter, the Helper of your infirmities, your indwelling Inspirer to good works, your Fire of holy love, and your Teacher of prayer, who will utter your soul-longings as His own.

God the Father is now knocking at each heart by the greatness of His love. *God the Son* is now knocking by His free and full redemption. *God the Holy Ghost* is now knocking by His gracious strivings. The Holy Trinity have combined to save you, and united to allure you to be saved. Accept now the eternal life that is in Christ Jesus, and in the place of past estrangement will be mutual friendship, and you will enjoy the combined love of the indwelling Trinity. To open the door of the heart to Christ is to love Him, and to each who loves Him and keeps His commandments, the Son says: "My Father will love him, and *we* will come unto him and *make our abode with him.*"

But, though "I will sup with him and he with Me," embodies the impartation of whatever is essential to present and to everlasting happiness, those who have decided not to open the door to Christ must be reminded that though the Saviour will not break open the door by forcing your will, you *will* hear another knock, and the door *will* be forced.

Death comes on with reckless foot-steps
To the hall and hut:
Think you, death will tarry knocking
Where the door is shut?
Jesus waiteth, waiteth, waiteth,
But the door is fast,
Grieved, away the Saviour goeth:
Death *breaks in* at last!

Wherever you go and whatever you do, *remember* that "It is appointed unto man once to die, and *after death* the judgment." May the sunshine flash it and the night stars beam it, that during the brightness of the day and the darkness of the night you may be reminded that He who now implores admission at your heart will then be your judge. You must behold Him in His Almightiness, and be manifested before Him, and by Him be acquitted or condemned, and from Him receive a welcome into His kingdom, or everlasting banishment from His glorious presence. "He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son, hath not life." On each Christless soul, the wrath of God *abideth*. If you disregard Christ's knock at your heart now, He will not hear your knock at His mercy-door then.

Then 'tis time to stand entreating
Christ to let thee in,
At the gate of heaven beating
Waiting for thy sin.
Nay, alas, thou guilty creature!
Hast thou then forgot?
Jesus waited long to know thee
Now He knows thee not.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FINISHED SALVATION.

SERMON BY THE REV. DANA M. WALCOTT, OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RUTHERFORD PARK, NEW JERSEY, ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, 1876.

"It is finished!"—*John xix.*, 30.

The Christian religion is often called a finished salvation. It is plainly evident that but very few Christians or others practically believe it. The church and world are both full of waiting souls, who seem to be expecting something to be done by God which He has left unfinished. They yet wait for some new revelation other than that He has given, as if that were incomplete. They are hoping for a different gospel, probably because they feel they "are not as other men are," and therefore need a peculiar salvation to suit their individual experience. They are plainly not "common people," else they would hear Christ gladly. Let us consider then what is a finished salvation. Surely, that is a complete and finished salvation which does all it agrees to! Not what we demand, but what its author promised. Whatever Christ's meaning was when He uttered these dying words, let us see if His sentiment is not scripturally and spiritually true, as applied to the following thoughts, namely: I. His FORGIVENESS; II. OUR SIN; III. OUR CONVICTION OF SIN. Surely, that must be safe to preach to men which seeks to stop men from sinning, and to "let His kingdom come, and His will be done on earth, as it is in heaven?"

I. His forgiveness.—What is forgiveness, but giving Himself for us? Many seem to think it is the mere negative letting go of our just punishment, but that is only giving us His pardon. The central thought all through the scriptures is, that "He gave Himself for us." Not that He promised to, but has done it in the past, in old testament sacrifices and symbols, the "burning bush" and "pillar of fire," in the person of His servants the "prophets," and last of all, He sent His Son. The value in all these gifts was the *God* that dwelt in the offerings—His gift of Himself for us. It was no new gift, for the "Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world." God always had been giving Himself for us. And why? What do we need Him for? I do not say "want," but *need*, for alas! men do not want Him. What else but to save us from committing sin; to keep us from daily wrong-doing; "to lead us not into temptation, but to deliver us from evil?" What do men need more than to be made honest and right now, and that on this earth, and not by-and-bye in heaven. Who but God Himself can do that which He has offered to do? But you say, "He has not forgiven *me;* He has not given Himself to me. I have not even asked Him to, and surely, He cannot give Himself for me if I do not ask or want Him to." Why not? Do we not every day give to people, thoughts, prayers and sacrifices, which they neither ask for or want? Whatever the theory, what are the facts? Did man want his own existence—yet did not God give it to him? And did God wait till His own existence was wanted before He gave it? Besides, is that a gift which we have to ask for? Much more if we have to pay for it by any coin of ours.

God's idea of righteousness is that we should have His righteousness, and therefore He came to bring it in Himself! "He is our Righteousness." He does not give us the power to become righteous ourselves—but "to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life."

Man cannot keep himself from sin, and God bids him "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This, then He has done—He has given us Himself, a complete Saviour, "able to keep that which is committed to His care." Not to theologians, but to sinners, has He given Himself, for they need Him. Not His plan of salvation has He given for men to wrangle over, but salvation—Himself. The Magi are a long time getting from His star to Himself who is nearer us than He ever was or can be to the stars. We are His image and incomplete, till He is *in* His image, and now, as He dies—having

given Himself in every other way—He does so in our nature, and for us sinners and He cries, "*It is finished*!"

II. Our Sin.—If God has not given Himself for us, then we have yet to commit our greatest sin in rejecting Him. We are not to blame for not asking for what we do not want; but when He has offered to us the gift of Himself, our greatest possible sin is then complete in "despising and rejecting Him." Many are waiting, thinking they have not yet committed any very great and heinous crime, but what greater sin can there be than in refusing to take Him at His word, "who offers to save His people from their sins?" It is not strange that the brutes should not receive Him, or pagans, but "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Here is where our condemnation begins—not under Sinai, but Calvary. He has thrust Himself upon man, and the question is forced upon him, "What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?" He cannot stay on neutral ground; the gift is put in his hands, and he must keep it or throw it away! "He came, that we might have life." *His life* He has given for us; what have we done with it? His will, not only was, but *is* to-day, to live with us, and keep us from sin. If it is *not* ours, then have we not "denied the Holy One and Just; and desired a murderer [self] to be granted us, and killed the Prince of Life?" Who is most alive in us—Himself or ourself? Whose life do we desire most—His or ours? Whose will do we desire done in us—His or ours? Have we not often hoped and wished His plans would not prevail, and begged for ours in place of His? What is this but to cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him?" Even to have kept silence in indifference, as if He were not the God of the Americans as well as the Jews, is also to crucify Him. Yet we have permitted others to lead Him away, who gave Himself for all men, "the Just for the unjust;" "who came to seek and to save that which was lost;" who calls Himself "the Friend of sinners." People say "I do not pretend to be 'good.' I make no profession of saintliness. I am not interested in this matter, or responsible for His treatment." But you are just the one for whom He gave Himself—the sinner you profess to be—and you with wicked hands have rejected Him.

Two thoughts centre at His cross, namely: God's gift of Himself; and man's refusal to take Him. To reject His "plan" or "theory" is not our sin; but to deliberately choose "*not* to have this man to rule over us"—to refuse Him the daily keeping of our souls from sins—to refuse to own the sins which He has been faithful and just to give Himself for, what viler sin can stain such a heart, in any future that is possible? Not to refuse to love Him, so much as to refuse to believe in His love; and to say, by doubt, "He has not given Himself for me and my sins."

The heart that has *now* no God, Lover, Forgiver, Keeper, Saviour, Counsellor, Wisdom, Righteousness, Strength, Salvation, because it *will not* let the King of Glory in, is it "not already fully set in him to do evil?" Such a "heart *is* deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and need not wait to become so. Its attitude *has* been and *is* against its own interests, and a thousand years of waiting can never make its sin more complete. To be despised and rejected of Him were more reasonable; but for Him to be despised and rejected of the very men He came to save may well make Him cry of all sin "It is finished!"

III. Conviction of Sin. But men say, "I am not conscious of any such sin. The Jews killed Him, not I. You say I am this great sinner, but I do not feel it. I am not yet convicted of sin. I wait for that." What is it to be convicted of sin except simply to be convinced that we do not believe in Christ? Where shall we look for that evidence but in our actions, that speak louder than words? God promises "to keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Him." Have you perfect peace? "They shall call His name Jesus, because He shall save His people from their sins." Are you safe from committing sin? "Trust in the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength." Have you everlasting strength—strength that never grows weak or fails?

My friends, conviction of sin is not conviction of shame or remorse or sorrow *because* of sin, but it is conviction of *sin*. It is not conviction of feeling, but of "not believing." Christ says, "He, [the Holy Spirit] shall reprove the world of sin because they believe *not* on Me." Not because of what they do or do not do, or of what they *do believe*, but because they "*do not* believe on Me." "Whatsoever is *not* of faith, is sin." The Holy Spirit has done His work when He has proven that. Does the simple truth, facts, not feelings, prove our unbelief? If so, that is all the Spirit engaged to do. However dim or deep the conviction, it is finished; however faint or overwhelming our *feeling* or lack of it —the *lack of faith* in Christ is proven, and that is enough.

He came not to have His life taken away. "No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." Did He not lay it down to prove plainly that we would not have it? As soon as they had crucified Him they said, "surely this was the Son of God." None but God could lay down His life rather than trample out that of His murderers, as He might have done. Behold, men parting His garments among them (*i.e.* His material wealth)! Hear them crying piteously for "His peace!" See them begging to be taken to "His heaven," and yet rejecting Him!

What means this wrangling over His theories, much more over ours, while we coolly ignore Him? "He is our peace"—He is our salvation—not His plan, much less *ours*.

Patiently, He waits upon His cross till they stab Him. "If I had not come and done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had [known] sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." "They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father, for I and My Father are one." They have despised and rejected Me—not I them—and they know "it is finished."

What, then, is wanting? Do we wait for Him to come and forgive us, obedient to our many askings? But He came, long before we were born,—much more before we asked Him to! "Charity," says some one, "that comes for the asking, comes too late!" Before man sinned, He gave Himself for man; nor did He stop giving afterwards! Even on the cross, our Saviour still prayed "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," *i. e.*, still have Thy mercy, which endureth forever, and keep giving Thyself for them. Though the gift is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, let the giving of Thyself be new every morn and fresh every even.

Do we *wait* to commit some great sin, worthy of so great a Saviour and salvation? But while we wait, we keep Him waiting. This is the condemnation, that light *is come* into the world, and men preferred the darkness [of doubt,] rather than the light, [of faith.] He has our life, we have our death. He has our righteousness, we have our sin. Against Him, ourselves, and our neighbor, we sin daily in thus frustrating the grace of God.

Do we wait to feel we are thus doubting? But we are only asked to *believe* it. Peace and joy come not by believing we are sinners, but by believing He is our Saviour.

"A sham Saviour," as says Spurgeon, "is for a sham sinner; a real Saviour for a real sinner."

His gift of Himself is real. Our not having that saving power from sin is also terribly real; and our knowledge of both facts clinches it all. These three things *are finished:* 1.—His forgiveness; or giving of *Himself* to keep us from sin. 2.—Our rejection of that gift. 3.—And the bitter knowledge of it all. What more is needed to prepare us for Him, who was prepared for us before the foundation of the world?

Oh, friends, it is our doubt that needs finishing; our dreadful crucifixion of our Saviour! You do it; alas, I do it. The angels wait to hear us cry of our wicked unbelief in Him, IT IS FINISHED. "He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." How many more stripes shall we lay upon Him by our unbelief, before we shall be healed? For Christ's sake,

would that *to-day*, His crucifixion was for us eternally finished! What remains for me to do, but to *trust* Him to finish that which He has begun; and not to undertake to finish it for Him? What greater gift are we waiting for than that of *His own life* He *hath* given us in His Son? "There remaineth therefore now no more sacrifice for sin." Hath He any offering greater than Himself? "We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." For He saith, "I have heard thee in a time accepted; and in the day of salvation have I succored thee; behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation."

Nothing, either great or small,
Remains for me to do,

that I may work the works of God, but to believe on Him whom He *hath* sent, that "*He* may work in me to will and do of His good pleasure." In Him "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye *are* complete in Him!"

CHAPTER XIX.

GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

SERMON BY THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D., ON SUNDAY SEPT. 3, 1876.

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."—*Prov. xxv.*, 25.

God's best gifts are very common-place things. They are so necessary to our existence and enjoyment that few men think enough about them to be thankful for them. They are so freely and faithfully bestowed that their absence or withdrawal is too often counted an act of personal injustice, and a sufficient excuse for discontent and rebellion. They are so plainly the result of certain natural laws that most men fail to connect with them the thoughts and hand and power of God. Such daily and essential blessings are the air we breathe, the light which so delicately falls upon the eye and reveals the world about us, the health which courses through our veins and gives the glow of vigor in endeavor and endurance, the heat about which, in its artificial form, we gather during the cold winter, and from which we find escape in the noon-day of the summer, but which in all its many relations is the force so essential to life—and water, that we drink for refreshment, in which we bathe for cleanliness, upon which we depend in all the arts of life, which, in the form of steam, is the great power that projects the machinery of man and the servant which carries him upon his every journey. You do not tell the whole story of cold water when you have described its chemistry, the particles of which it is composed, and the laws which combine them to produce the result, when you have explained its attraction, as in the tides responding to the mysterious power in the firmament, when you have calculated nicely its

forces as it turns the turbine wheel and is resolved into a propelling power, when you have discriminated and multiplied in your calculations its uses in all the different relations of life. This is not the whole history of cold water. It rises on the wings of the sun from mid ocean, it floats in the fleecy clouds of heaven, it distils in the dew-drop, it patters in the rain, it is hoary in the snow-flake, it is vindictive, hateful, in the hail, it is full of cheer as the sun paints its own image upon the shower and the rainbow is formed. See it bubbling in the summer-time from the spring. Look at it laughing in the rivulet, which runs over the little pebbles in the brook. Listen to it roaring in the cataract, mighty in the river, noisy in the torrent. Behold the still surface of the lake, the only mirror God has given us on earth of His firmament on high. Unmoved in its quietness it tells of the rest of heaven. Cold water! The flowers exhale it in their fragrance and their perfume, and imprison it in their fibre and their stalk. The beast of the forest and the field, as man himself, depend upon it for their breath and very life. God's great common-place gift to this world is cold water.

And how few of us appreciate the blessing or trace it back to the bounty of its giver! The traveler in the desert, overtaken by the deadly heat, looks most wistfully at the mirage of the fountain, and follows it with persistent effort only to be disappointed when he has reached the expected position in which his eye has seen it. Like a child chasing the foot of the rainbow, he never finds it. That poor friend of ours who has been bound these days and nights in the burning chains of fever, oh, how has he plead, while we have watched with him, for water, water, water! ice! something that shall cool the tip of his tongue. Then do we learn somewhat about this gift and the God who bestows it that we knew not before. The mower, in the heat and toil of the day, comes to the spring, and he has learned a lesson about this old blessing that could only have been taught by that experience.

Dear friends, God giveth cold water to thirsty souls. Every time you taste a drop, remember Him whose great reservoir above supplies it, and who has in all the many forms of the conduit applied it to your need. Poor Hagar, driven from the house which had been her home, hid under the shade of the tamarisk tree her son, for the water-skin was empty and he was dying of thirst. God sent His angel to point her to the fountain close by, and her child revived. Hagar owned the value of the gift just at that time. Israel wandered through the wilderness until at last they came to Horeb, and there, when famishing with thirst, Moses struck the rock and the water flowed out. "They drank of that rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ," says Paul.

Then they learned the value of the gift and what it meant spiritually. David, standing with his host before the gates of Bethlehem, captured by the Philistines, said: "Oh, that one would give me of the water of Bethlehem to drink!" And three stalwart men urged their way in the face of death through the host, and drew of that old water that David had tasted when a boy in the home of Jesse of Bethlehem, and loved so well from old associations. They brought it to him. He poured it out as a drink offering before the God who gave it, for it was the price of souls. Then, in the terrible parable of our Lord, we read the piteous lamentation of Dives in condemnation: "Send Lazarus that he may dip his finger in water and cool my tongue!"—One drop! But it was a part of his loss, that his soul, shut out from the knowledge of the goodness of God, could not share in any of its manifestations.

Now this is a discovery plain to all experience—the blessedness of cold water to thirsty souls. "So," saith the Spirit, "is good news from a far country," how refreshing, how compensating, how invigorating it is! This is a most familiar comparison. What relief and strength has good news brought to many of you during these times of panic, when you have supposed yourselves lost in the affairs and relations of this world, and some kindly message has relieved your perplexities and restored your self-composure. How, in times of the war, when your mother's and father's hearts were broken with fearful anticipations, did the good news from the battle-field, as the mail scattered the tidings, cheer again to hope and confidence those who were so anxious about the issue of the struggle? Ah! have you ever been the minister of ill tidings? Have you ever been compelled to break sad news to some one not expecting the revelation? There sat in my study, one day, a poor girl who had committed a child for whom she could not care, to the tender compassion of the good people about me. During her absence, the little one, a babe of weeks, sickened and died. We knew not where the mother was, we could not send a message to her, or summon her to the funeral. At last she appeared, she sat before me, her whole face full of expectation and delight; she soon hoped to fold the little one she loved in her arms, and I had to tell her the story of its death and burial. Never have I seen such anguish on this earth as that hour. The bearer of ill tidings needs to be sustained and taught by the Spirit of God, as no other messenger on the earth. How shall I tell, to-morrow, that young man that the days he has to live on earth are numbered? How shall I sit by his bed-side, and point him, hoping in the deception of disease for strength and vigor again, to his resting-place? God help you when duty compels you on such an errand as this. But oh, when the heart

is full of some good thing, when the mouth can overflow with the most exaggerated description of blessings that are about to be revealed, when from your own knowledge you can tell the possessions that are just within the grasp of some one, how fleet-footed are you? How earnest your eloquence to make the fact appear, and impress it upon the mind of the one to whom you speak! Even so, saith the wise man, the good news that God sends to man come as cold waters to thirsty souls.

Now let us sit down to-night by the Bethlehem manger. No, let us gather around Samaria's well. No, let us stand before the open sepulchre, from which the Lord has risen. The cross, the wood of the cross, marks the whole way from Bethlehem to Golgotha. He who has started with the babe must follow Him through every experience of His life, until he beholds Him crucified for his sin and accepted in his stead. Let us sit down by these fountains, these springs, these wells of water in Jesus' life, and hear the story of this great Saviour, who has come traveling in the greatness of His strength from the far country.

I. First of all, let me speak to you about the FAR COUNTRIES FROM WHICH JESUS BRINGS GOOD TIDINGS. A soldier, a scholar, a discoverer, many years since, parted from his home and all that was loving and attractive, impelled by the thirst of knowledge. He was lost in his search, and the frozen regions of the north kept the solemn secret of his life and death. His faithful lady commissioned embassy upon embassy to find him, if alive, or to discover some mark of his death. He penetrated into the far country of the frozen regions, and only lately the tidings came of his history. Our own government fitted out the *Polaris* for similar investigation. The story of her loss and of the restoration of her crew is known to us all. The memory of Dr. Livingstone we associate with a far country, an unknown region to us, and private enterprise sent forth searchers after him. There came to this city, not many years since, the crowned Prince of Russia, and New York put on its best appearance to welcome him. Its citizens forgot their ordinary occupations in the purpose and effort to entertain him. All Britain was in an uproar of delight because the Shah of the Persias lately found a resting-place among its palaces and quiet homes. Far countries are represented by these different persons, who have thus stood out before the community in their different missions. But, my dear friends, distance is not always measured by miles. Two may dwell in the same house, and yet be divided by an infinite removal. Father and mother may sit at either end of the table, but between them an impassable gulf of estrangement may be fixed, and the bitter word and the sullen look responding to one another, tell of a division which can only be bridged by Divine

grace and power, if the twain are to be made one. Two men may be in a co-partnership in the city, daily occupied in similar transactions for the same end, and yet enmity, jealously, greed may withhold them from each other's confidence, and make them at last, when the developed passion has had full sway, implacable enemies of one another. But oh, when the news of reconciliation comes from one to the other, when the old confidence is restored, when across the distance the word peace, peace, is sounded, and the gracious plan of restoration is accomplished, then there is no more sea. The far countries are brought near neighbors, and they who have dwelt in these hostile regions sit down together in comfort and quietness and confidence. And so it is with our God. He may be close by you; He is everywhere. A little child was asked how many Gods are there? and the answer was, "One only." "Why?" "Because God fills everything, and there can only be one God." Omnipresence is the very perfection of God; and yet, while you sit here, my brother, you may be conscious of infinite distance between you and the heart of God. He is in a far country to you; not a Father upon whose bosom you can repose your head, not the Saviour into whose ear you can breathe out your secret, not the Friend upon whose arm yon can lean in all the struggles and cares of this world. But through the Lord Jesus Christ, we who were afar off are made nigh, for He brings us good news from—

1. *The Far Country of the Everlasting Covenant.* The gospel, like all great rivers, rises above the plain, above the hills, above the high mountain top, in the very peak, the highest places, yea, above the earth, in the places not made with hands. O, the mountains of faithfulness! O, the plains of peace! O, the deep gorges of the Divine decrees! O, the sun-light of reconciliation! O, the rivers, full of water, in the land that is so far off from the wilful sinner! There the eternal God has His throne. There are the palaces of the Great King. Here were the councils of eternity held. Here was the condescension of the Son of God designed and decreed. Here did the eternal and co-equal persons of the Holy Trinity enter into solemn vows to each other to save man. O, how can the finite impure soul look towards this land of the glory of God! But, behold! here is One who hath come from that far country, who hath brought good news, who tells of a compact in all things well-ordered and made sure, who declares that the Father in that land that is very far off is reconciled to you, who assures of His own great work of propitiation, by which the law of the Lord God is honored in our stead, who engages the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, sustaining us, sanctifying us, helping us, in all the experiences of this life. As we listen to His word, contained in this holy Book, how the eye

of faith glistens! how the smile of reconciliation comes upon the very face of the reader! Time, eternity, space, they are all nothing now. God is brought near from the land of the everlasting covenant. Yea, so graphic are the words of Christ about that country, that they are verily photographed—painted with the sun-light of the celestial city. They stand out in relief that men may make no mistake whence comes this traveler, or whither goes the hearer. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the fountain! drink ye of the good news from the far country of the covenant.

2. But again, this Great Traveller has come from the *Far Country of the Expiation Accomplished.* Our Lord Jesus Christ died in Palestine, and yet, I suppose, hardly one of us ever saw the Holy Land. Travellers that have journeyed through it have been terribly disappointed. Their fancy has pictured a very wide extent of country, and they have found that the whole of the land could be easily compared with one of our smallest States. But *our* Holy Land is more than miles, is more than the ruins that remain, or sacred scenes about which we read. Bethlehem! What is it to you? It is the birthplace of the Incarnate God, and Christmas takes you to the manger. The manger has long since passed away, and even the point in Bethlehem cannot be determined. Golgotha! What is it to you? It is the cross of a Saviour suffering in our stead, lifted up to draw all men unto Him. Jerusalem! What is it to us? Not the city with the mosque, neither the city with the temple, but the city in which Jesus spoke living words, and from which He sent forth His glorious gospel of salvation. But these are farther away from earthly minds and sinful souls than even the words themselves and the places they represent are from our physical journeying. Dear brethren, what do you know about the Bethlehem incarnation of God until you have begun to know Christ as your own God and Saviour. The crucifixion—it is no more than a great tragedy, until from the far country of the expiation accomplished there comes a message of personal cheer and pardon to you. This it is that brings gladness to the soul, whensoever it is realized and enjoyed. We come to Golgotha, and we sit down before the cross, as did the centurion, just as really. Our Lord is dying; our Lord is dead; they are taking down the body; they are to bury it in Joseph's tomb! The Lord has risen! The Lord is ascending! Angels convoy Him; clouds enclose Him; the Father receives Him; the everlasting doors are open for His welcome! This good news comes to us from the far country of a reconciliation accomplished and an expiation once for all offered. There is a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Come ye to that fountain—ye who loathe your sin and in guilt are overwhelmed.

3. But, thirdly, the great Traveler brings us good news from the *Far Country of Doom.* Good news from hell! Can it be possible? Surely nothing but groans and sighs and gnashing of teeth, have we ever associated with the place of the lost? Robert Hall, in one of those masterly passages of his eloquence, describes the funeral of a condemned sinner who had passed the period of possible hope. He veils the light of the sun; he turns the moon to blackness; he shrouds the ocean and the land with a pall, as a testimony to the solemnity of the event; and he declares, that if all nature had a voice, from the deep tone of the thunder to the quietest and most musical note on earth, the combined utterance of these many voices could not express the awful condemnation of the soul that has entered the place of the lost. Blessed be God! Heaven is above us, and we can look up to it. Hell is removed from us, else should our lives have been fearful from the sounds, and perplexed and despairing from the sight of that awful condemnation. But He who has thus come to us as a great traveler, has been in the place of the lost. He has broken the gates of brass; He has overthrown the horrid throne of him that is the king thereof; He has scattered its shades of darkness; He has overcome its power; He has carried away its fetters; He has quenched its fire. There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. There is no hell to that man of you who clings to this great Saviour, traveling in the greatness of His strength. This is not to teach extinction. Does this mind of ours develop for seventy years in its acute analysis of the things of earth, the things of God, and then go out in blankness? Does this soul of man proceed from the lowest to the most spiritual powers and passions, and then is it in the hour of death annihilated? Nay, that would be the strangest miracle of time. I preach no such doctrine as that, but I tell thee, my brother, that if thou dost rest solely on the word of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the endurance of the condemnation of thy sin, in the obedience He rendered, and the punishment He suffered in thy stead, then is the power of hell and the place of hell for thee sealed for ever. No devil, nor all devils combined, can wrest from the hand of God that soul that is closed in His palm by the everlasting fingers. Such is the good news which has come to us from the place of doom.

4. But, lastly, we have the *Far Country of an Entered Heaven.* One of our Lord's parables represents Him as the son of a king going into a far country to receive a kingdom, and returning again. He did most majestically enter the gates of life. Do you doubt it? He has risen, He has gone into the place not made with hands. But He has come again by His Spirit, in His Word, to souls. Jesus hath revealed Himself as He

doth not to the world. We read in the 45th chapter of the Book of Genesis, that when Jacob, in his far-off home, heard that Joseph was alive in Egypt, his spirit sank within him, for he thought they lied to him, but when he saw the chariots and wagons which Joseph had sent down from Pharaoh's land to bring him and his family and all his possessions up to the place in which he lived, it is written, the heart of Jacob, his father, revived. When you read this Word, which is a chariot with a hundred wheels, wheel within wheel, a cohort of angels, with extended pinions, to carry the people of God safely through the distance, a gracious guide to him who pursues with perseverance the heavenward way, ever beckoning him on, and encouraging him with new promises in dispensations of grace by the way, then are you assured Joseph is alive, he is at the throne. These are the things that he has sent to convince us of the fact. Good news from an entered heaven does this great Traveler bring us, assuring us of the joys that are yet in store for us. Nay, more than that, do you remember the map of Palestine? The river Jordan runs from north to south, bisecting the land. Part of Canaan is on one side of the river, the other half on the nether side. Even so, our heaven is on both sides Jordan. The river of death runs between the two parts of our experience. The high places are on the far side of the flood. But what Christian man is there, who has rested in the Lord Jesus Christ as his complete, perfect, present Saviour, who is not conscious of joys and privileges which are more than earth? They are heaven itself, and his possession hereafter shall differ only in degree, not in kind. Dear brother, if you have seen the Lord Jesus Christ in His Word, and heard Him say "Thy sins be forgiven thee," then thou hast had thy first realization of heaven. When, in the toil of some day of trial, His Spirit has whispered to thee "My grace is sufficient for thee," oh, then you have learned somewhat of the unwearied service of saints at rest. When you have studied the footsteps of your Lord, and prayed for grace to put your feet of obedience in the marks of His consecration, then you have learned somewhat about "following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," which is to be your privilege and portion forever. The masterly eloquence of the Son of God makes us rejoice over the things in the far country, even whilst we are journeying toward them.

II. From these four far countries has our Saviour, Christ, brought good news. Let me very briefly tell you about THE COMFORT FROM AFAR.

How it *slakes the thirst of fear!* There is a hearer, who, when he thinks alone of his sin, and compares his life and character with the law of God, is speechless. Even in the lower courts of earth, the tongue thickens and the mouth is parched with

thirst, as the conscious criminal stands before the judge that shall consign him instantly to his doom! How much rather when the soul is summoned by anticipation to the bar of God! Now comes the good news to that thirsty and fearful one: thy sins are forgiven; thy punishment has been endured; not one drop of punishment is there in the whole ocean of this world's experiences. O soul, there is pardon for thee! There is justification, there is acceptance. There is a great Advocate praying for thee this moment, if thou wilt believe and trust the message that this great Traveler brings. One of our city missionaries, the other day, met a poor, miserable, fallen girl, who not only was ashamed, but convinced of her sin. (Where are the fallen men in the city of New York? We talk of fallen women. God have mercy upon the fallen men!) The missionary expostulated with her. He found out where her father lived, and proposed to inform him about her. "No, no!" she said, "I would not have him know for the world." "Why not, my poor girl?" "Oh, I cannot let him know where I am. I ran away from home. He never has heard of me since. I would not tell him the disgrace that has been brought to his name." "Nay, but if your father would welcome your return?" "No, it cannot be. My sin is too great. It cannot be." But at last she was persuaded, and the missionary wrote a message to her father. In the course of a few days there came to his hand a letter, with "Immediate" written across the corner. He opened it, and what there was in it I cannot tell you in full, but this was its substance: "Tell her to come home! I have prayed for her every morning and every night since she went away. Tell her, come home! Her father forgives her, and longs to have her by his side." "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father!" Dear brother, if thou art perplexed with fears to-night, come home, says this great Saviour; thou art forgiven; thou needest fear no longer.

But again, how this good news *satisfies the thirst of faith.* Now faith is the tongue of the soul, by which it tastes the graciousness of a God of mercy. It may be a feverish tongue sometimes, but still a tongue. It can tell the sweetness and the preciousness of the tidings. And when a man believes this message, what shall I tell him then? Tell him the message over again. I have no sympathy with that class of men who think there is one sort of instruction for the sinner and another for saints. It is not so in my experience. That one of you who in my times of temptation and trial will stand by my side, and put his hand upon my knee, and tell me of the forgiving love of God, my Saviour, will do more for me than if he could instruct me in all the dogmatic system to which I subscribe. It will do well enough to have

these great truths to build up character, strength and life; but that which faith wants immediately is the good news. And it wants it all the time. One draught of the water is not enough. We hunger, we thirst after the righteousness of our great Saviour, who suffered in our stead. We would not have our thirst quenched. What different souls come to it! At the little place where I make my country home, close by the railroad station, there is a well. The water is celebrated through the whole valley. There is an old bucket and a battered cup by the well-side. The farm-hands at noon-time and evening come to the well and drink for their satisfaction. The lord of the manor in the neighborhood does not slight its refreshment. When he is thirsty he takes the cup like the rest. And when a train comes in, and is arrested for a few moments, from the locomotive, from the baggage car, from all the carriages behind, there come crowds of men, who gather about that curb and satisfy their thirst. The old country well! it is one of the happiest things in recollection, as our minds look back to our summer home. Just so is this great well of salvation. It will not do to take one cup full, and and then say good-bye to the provision. We need it every day, and we all need it. The thirst of faith is never quenched. Like the fire of hell, it is unquenchable this side eternity, and the more one drinks the more he wants of the good news that the Lord, traveling in the greatness of his strength, brings.

But shall I say, lastly, how *this good news sustains the thirst of hope.* Hope, like the eagle, soars towards heaven. On the wings of hope the sinner saved by grace goes home. He thirsts for all the joys that are with the Lord. He longs for the pure water, clear as crystal, that proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb. When you have begun, my dear friend, you will never cease to hope. If you have the silver, you will want the gold; if you have the gold, you will want the crystal; if you have the crystal, you will still long for the precious gem. There is no need in the world like the thirst of hope. The old mariners used to think that the pillars of Hercules were the end of the world, and when they were reached, all beyond was a waste of waters. Now when they sail beyond the pillars of Hercules, they are only beginning their voyage to other and distant lands. Just so is it in Christian life. Some young Christians determine a mark and say: when we get there we will be satisfied. Lo, when they have passed that attainment, immensity, infinity of promise is before them, and the Christian sets full sail and speeds out on the ocean of Divine love and grace we have not yet attained! The more we have, the more we shall want.

So do the good news from the far country of the everlasting covenant, of the expiation accomplished, of the land of doom,

of the entered heaven, slake the thirst of fear, satisfy the thirst of faith, sustain the thirst of hope.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold I freely give
The living water; thirsty one
Stoop down, and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream,
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

Jesus, crucified, cried, "I thirst." The soldier took the sponge and dipped it in vinegar and put it on a reed, and tried to wet the poor parched lips and relieve the thirst of death. His body did not thirst. His soul was full of longings in that hour. The peculiar drink and refreshment of God, our Saviour, is the salvation of souls. He longed in dying for the myriads that should believe on Him through the story of His death. Now that He hath ascended to heaven, it is said that He still yearns over us; He waits "to see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied." Dear brother, send a message to-night to the far country, by that errand-bearer, prayer. Let prayer take thy confession to the Father's throne—bear thy acknowledgement of guilt and submission. Let him bring back to thy faith the assurance of thy forgiveness. Such good news shall quench the thirst of Christ. Oh! if some soul here will thus pray this night, "there shall be joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The bells of heaven will ring out with rejoicing. The hosts of the redeemed shall echo the salutation: One pardoned sinner more! God grant you that great consciousness before you sleep! Amen.

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

SERMON BY THE REV. J. SPENCER KENNARD, OF THE THIRTY-THIRD STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY, ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1876.

"What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?"—*Matt. xxvii.*, 22.

Pilate, the governor, is seated in the judgment hall. A man, worn with grief, yet majestic in his meek innocence, stands before him. A mysterious man to most, a just man, and a prophet in the eyes of devout Jews; and by a few disciples claimed to be "the Messiah that should come." He has been undergoing trial for His life. The jealousy and hate of Jewish accusers has exhausted its ingenuity, and His judge has acquitted Him. Nevertheless, the mob, stirred up by the priests and Pharisees, demand His death. His judge wickedly vacillates. He wants the favor of the people, yet his convictions of conscience prompt him to set the prisoner free. In his perplexity he remembers the custom of releasing a prisoner at the feast, at the governor's option. He thinks of Barabbas, a notorious robber and cut-throat; and he ingeniously puts him in comparison with Jesus, and gives the people their choice. Surely they will not dare to let loose that wretch whom the whole neighborhood regarded with horror? "Barabbas or Jesus?" And they cried out "Give us Barabbas!" Ah, he had not learned that such is the enmity of the human heart to God, that men will run any risks, and let loose on themselves any horrors rather than accept a Saviour! Astonished and bewildered at the failure of his hopes, and his fears of the vengeance of the

people for the time overcoming his fears of God's judgment, he says to them, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?" He should not have asked that question; he should have manfully executed his purpose to deliver Jesus out of their hands. But his want of firm and manly principle made him vacillate, and each step of departure from the line of absolute justice became easier. He saw that he had yielded too much to the violence of the rabble, and was in their power. They saw their advantage, and seized it; and now boldly, in the face of the verdict, cried out "Crucify Him! Away with Him!" In vain did he attempt to expostulate; the voice of the judge was drowned. They gained their fatal victory. And being delivered up to their violent hands, He is led away to the Hill of Blood.

Friends, the scene is a typical one. In every generation, and in every congregation since then, the same wonderful, benignant, suffering Christ stands His trial and awaits the verdict. He, who holds our destinies in His hands, nevertheless presents Himself before the judgment bar of our consciences, our hearts, our will; and the mightiest question that ever a soul was called to answer, is: "What shall *I* do with Jesus which is called the Christ?" And

I.—We must do something with Him.

Many would fain have no responsibility in the matter; they do not wish to decide any question with reference to Christ. They desire to regard His person, work and claims, as something which they were at liberty to consider or not, according to their own pleasure. It is a delicate, difficult business, which they would dismiss, at least, to some remotely future day. Gladly would Pilate have rid himself of the whole matter of the trial of Jesus, as an embarrassing and unpleasant matter, to decide which he felt reluctant; because, whichever way he decided, it would involve difficulty to himself. But as the case was brought before him, there was no escape. He *had* something to do with Jesus from his official position. He must decide for or against Him.

And it is equally true that we *cannot shirk this responsibility.* Christ has much to do with us and we with Him. It is as impossible for us to forget or ignore Him as the sun at noon-day. He has come into the world as a mediator between God and man; as the Saviour of sinners; as a Prophet, Priest and King; not for some different race, but for *us*,—for you and me. He, in His personality, in His work, and in His gospel, comes *near* to every one of us. His words are sounding in our ears; His cross meets us in our path; His hand knocks at our heart's door; His whole life, mission and death, and present position and work in heaven is in our behalf. It has no other meaning. Nor is there a man, woman or child in all the world, to whom Christ has been revealed as the Saviour of sinners, but will be made, now and eternally, the

better or the worse for that knowledge; aye, the chief element in their eternal happiness or misery will be the treatment that they have given Him. His blood will be upon them, either as a fountain of cleansing or as an overwhelming curse.

Pilate thought to escape by washing his hands, and saying, "See ye to it. I am innocent of the blood." But the water did not cleanse his soul; the blood of Christ was there, and will appear when he would fain hold out his hands, and say, "These hands are clean."

It being clear that you have much to do with Christ, it is also clear that you have to do with Him *now*. He stands before you, the trial is ended, all the evidence is in; what judgment are you about to pronounce? Both worlds are watching you to hear your decision. What think you of Christ, and what are you going to do with Christ? Is He or is He not the Saviour of men, of men like you? Is He worthy of your trust and affection, and, if so, what are you going to do with Him? Suffer yourself, oh friend, to enter seriously into the decision of this momentous question, and do it at once. It is a question of life and death with you, and nobody else can settle it for you. Let me make the matter so clear that you cannot fail to grasp the issue.

II. LOOK AT EACH OF THE DOORS THROUGH WHICH CHRIST PRESENTS HIMSELF TO YOU FOR A VERDICT. First He stands at the gateway of your *intelligence* in His written gospel. Here is the history of His life, the mirror of His character, the record of His teachings and His works of heavenly mercy; here the pathetic story of His sufferings and death; here the explanation of His mediation and the testimony of many eye witnesses to His glorious mission. What will you do with this *Book* which claims your belief? Will you treat it as a fable, or, admitting its truth, deny your need of it, or will you give it your honest study to find Christ in it? Will you allow your mind to dwell on the picture of His suffering love till your whole heart expands to receive Him?

Again, He comes to you by His *Spirit*, enlightening, quickening your sensibilities, wooing you with tender solicitation, teaching you your need of the cleansing blood and the finished righteousness. With Divine yearnings that Spirit has lingered long at your door, but He will not always strive; He is beginning to be grieved by your cold delay, or timid vacillation. Say, my hearer, what will you do with the gentle Spirit of Christ? Slight Him still? Shut your eyes to the picture of the Crucified One which in vivid colors He portrays?

Again, Christ stands before you in the completeness of the *work of redemption*. Here is His perfect obedience in your behalf, which He offers as a substitute for yours', which has been a painful

failure. Look at the rags of your self-righteousness—they cannot cover you. Your naked sinfulness is seen, and you are not fit to appear at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Then look at Christ's righteousness, this spotless, royal garment which is offered you; better than princely purple to clothe, protect and adorn you. In it you will be welcome anywhere in God's heaven; aye, at the very throne itself. What will you do with it?

Here is the *forgiveness of sins* written by the hand and sealed by the Blood of the cross. He offers to blot out as a thick cloud your transgressions. It is a full, free and eternal pardon. Every sin is included in it, and all He asks is that you shall repent and forsake them henceforth. Now look into your heart—look back on your life. Can you number or estimate your sins? Look at a holy God, whose nature and word require Him to punish except ye come to Christ, and say, what will you do with this way, this only way of escape from your sins and their fearful penalty? What will you do with a pardoning Jesus?

He comes to you in the *fullness of reconciliation.* He has power with the Father. He offers by His death and intercession to make a perfect reconciliation. God will, for His sake, look upon you once more with complacent favor. He will accept and adopt you as His child. Now look upon yourself, banished from communion with God; a strange alienation, bitterness and loneliness of spirit and the prospect of being forever shut out of heaven. Only through Christ is He willing to meet you and extend to you His open arms of welcome. Christ, the Elder Brother, offers you His hand to lead you to those open arms. What will you do with His mediation? Will you give Him your hand and commit yourself to His gracious offers of reconciliation?

He comes in the *majesty of His claims* on you. He claims, that having done and suffered so much to redeem you, He has a right to your confidence and gratitude; having redeemed your body and soul, and gained for you eternal life, that you should devote soul and body to His service. These are His claims. These He presents with His pierced hands and repeats with His loving lips. What will you do with these claims? Are you ready to deny their validity; to disclaim all obligations, and after all that He has done, to declare your intention to live for yourself and give your heart to the world? What He asks is simply your heart. This you *can* give Him. Finally, He offers Himself in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel, an exhaustive fountain of love and gladness, the satisfaction of all the yearnings of your nature, and the crown of honor to you before men and angels. And the question then must be once more pressed upon you, "What will you do with Jesus?"

III. You may ask, my hearers, WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING; for this is the question that seems to decide many of our actions. Let me tell you then what men are doing with Jesus. And rest assured He receives a different treatment from different classes of men. The majority of the people still say: "Away with Him!" They deny His claims, His divinity, the power of His sacrifice. They steel their hearts against His appeals, shut the door upon Him, and proudly say "Who is this Lord and what is He to us?" They will wear the cross as an ornament upon the breast, but spurn it as a salvation from their hearts.

Then there is another class who freely admit that what the scriptures say of Christ may be true; they deny nothing. They even acknowledge the importance of salvation through Him, and approve of those who accept Him, but for themselves, with singular inconsistency, they say "I pray Thee have me excused." They feel no binding obligation to attend to His claims—He seems to them as a "root out of dry ground," and having a charitable desire that every one who needs may avail themselves of His gracious offers, they feel no such need, and have no such desire. Are you one of these?

There are others who treat Christ as though He could be trifled with—some most indulgent being who was to be found at any time when they might please to seek Him. The freeness and graciousness of Christ are so often repeated to them that they conclude no evil can result from treating Him just as the whim of the moment inclines them. With no serious desire to please Him, with no love or reverence for His character, with no sense of their need of Him as a Saviour, yet familiar with His name and sacrifice as a household word, they conclude they may dismiss His claims for the present, and at some future day of age, or trouble or death, call in His aid to bridge for them the gulf that separates them from heaven. But thank God! there are many in these days of gracious visitation who are eagerly receiving Christ. Never in the history of the church were there so many giving heed to His claims, searching his Word, admiring His loveliness, embracing His cross, and joining themselves to His people.

One of these beautifully expresses himself in these words: "I am blind and I take Jesus for my guide; I am naked, and I take His righteousness for my raiment; I have poverty, and He has riches of grace; I have weakness, and He has omnipotent strength; I have ignorance, and He has wisdom; I have sin, and He has cleansing blood and pardoning grace; I am full of wants, and He of rich supplies; does Satan arraign me, He is my advocate; am I forsaken, He stands by me; must I die, He is my resurrection. Well then, I will cling to Thee and

part with all the world rather than lose Thee, my Saviour. And God be thanked, I know Thou art not willing to do without me. Here is my poor heart, an empty vessel, fill it with Thy love, make it Thine abode, and may I ever steadfastly feel Jesus needs me and I Him, and so we suit each other."

Again, if you should ask what you should do with Christ, enquire of those who know Him best. Ask the angels who have always beheld His face, "What would you do with Jesus, ye happy seraphs?" Hark how they answer, as they fill the Judean night with their songs over His birth; see how they answer as they hover on throbbing wings around His earthly ministry, comforting Him in the wilderness of temptation and the garden of agony, rejoicing at His resurrection and escorting Him with shouts of triumph back to their blest abode. Hear them as these topmost beings of creation prostrate themselves in adoring wonder and forever more shout "Hallelujah to the Lamb that was slain." And yet He was not slain for them, but for *you*. Or, if you would go still higher, ask the Eternal Father Himself, in whose bosom He dwelt from eternity, "What, oh God, wouldst Thou do with Jesus?" and hear His answer, as He speaks from heaven at the baptism and the transfiguration, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." See it in the fact that because He humbled Himself to death for you, "He hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess." Ask both worlds what they would do with Him. The heavenly world, from every voice of saint and seraph, shout: "Crown Him Lord of all," and the world of lost souls responds, "It is our madness that we rejected Him, and our despair that we cannot take refuge in His wounds."

But is it not amazing that men should stay to debate this question, considering their state? Awakened from dreams to find himself in a burning room, a man sees the window thrown up and a friendly hand and a ladder waiting him to escape. Does he stand questioning what he shall do with it? A man adrift in the dark waves at night, sinking, touches with his hands a floating spar from the wreck; does he stop to ask, "What shall I do with it?" A man bitten by a venomous reptile, his limbs swelling, horrors of death staring him in the face, has an andidote placed in his hand; does he pause to enquire "What shall I do with it?"

But, finally, each of us must bear the responsibility of this decision for himself. Though all other beings in the world should choose Christ as a Saviour, it would not help you; and though all others should reject Him, it would not hinder your salvation, if you shall take Him to your heart. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt

bear it." Men do not receive or reject Christ in masses; but each in the secrecy and silence of his own thoughts ponders the momentous question, "*What shall I do with Jesus?*" As a solitary being you entered the world; as a solitary one you will depart from it; and as a solitary one you will be judged at last. Oh, then, forget every one to-night but your own soul and this waiting Saviour. Look at your own needs, your own sins, your own perils, and work out your *own* salvation with fear and trembling. Say to yourself, with all earnestness, "Oh, my soul, hast thou any wants that Christ can alone supply?" Yes; there is an aching void, a hungering for love, a weary longing for rest, a need of peace through purity; and here stands Christ, ready to fill those wants with all the fulness of the blessing of the gospel. "Oh, my soul, hast thou no sins of thine own? Ah, yes! sins heaped on sins; more than I can number." And here stands Christ, the sin-bearer; God's bleeding Lamb. He was made sin for thee, that thou mightest be made the righteousness of God through Him. "Thou, oh, my soul, art at this moment under condemnation; the broken law waits for a little while ere the sword of justice falls; thou hast no shelter from the wrath to come. But for Christ you would have long ago been consumed, as stubble before the flame. Nothing but His bleeding wounds can quench the flaming sword. Oh, my soul, wilt thou take refuge in those wounds? Oh, my soul, thy life has been wasted, and thy destiny is dark. But here, right at thy door waits a glorious Redeemer, who can and will make all things new and fair in life to thee, and gild eternity with hopes of immortal bliss.

Oh, lovely attitude! He stands
With melting heart and loaded hands.
Oh, matchless kindness! and He shows
This matchless kindness to His foes!

My soul! receive Him! and receive Him now. For see, He has waited long, is waiting still, you treat no other friend so ill.

Admit Him! ere His anger burn,
His feet departed ne'er return.
Admit Him! or the hour's at hand
You'll at His door rejected stand!

Yes, dying man, this is the last and most impressive thought with which I would have you go away: *What would I have Jesus do with me* in that day when He comes to judge the world? Anticipate that stupendous hour and scene. This place of prayer shall be changed for the judgment seat; instead of this congregation, an assembled world; instead of this hour of grace and invitation, the awful hour of doom; He who now stands before your heart, meekly waiting your decision, He with the scars of Calvary and the outstretched hands of pleading that you would

deal with Him kindly, will then be seated on the throne clothed in dazzling splendor, the hosts of heaven's angels surrounding Him as spectators of the trial, and you, the arrainged one, standing before His bar tremblingly pondering the question "What will Christ do with me?" Sinner, by all your hope of His mercy *then*, by all your fear of "the wrath of the Lamb" *then*, I beseech you receive and adore Christ *now*. For there is a step between thee and that great day, and the word of Christ has gone forth: "Whosoever shall *confess* Me before men, him will I *confess* also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall *deny* Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven."

CHAPTER XXI.

CHRIST OUR ROCK, REFUGE AND REFRESHMENT.

SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM ORMISTON, D.D., OF THE DUTCH REFORMED (COLLEGIATE) CHURCH, NEW YORK, ON TUESDAY, SEPT. 12, 1876.

"And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."—*Isaiah xxxii.*, 2.

In reading this passage, one is disposed to put the question which was asked by the eunuch of Philip as they rode together in the chariot: "Speaketh the prophet this of himself, or of some other man, and if of any other, then of whom?" Of none other than He, the Man of Nazareth, who, while our brother, was the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His person.

The sacred writers, in order that they may give to us, in our feebleness, something like an adequate conception of the many-sided Emmanuel, make use of every variety of figure or metaphor that may aid in exhibiting to us His person and His work. For this purpose, natural objects, whether they be grand and sublime or small and insignificant, are employed to display His varied excellencies. Every floweret that blooms beneath our feet, or star that twinkles over our heads is eloquent of Him. He is the Rose of Sharon, and the apple tree among the trees of the wood. He is the bright and morning star, and the Sun of Righteousness. The different relations, too, that we sustain to each other, the most sacred and tender, are all consecrated, because they are all used to remind us of His relations to us. He is our Prophet, Priest, King, Husband, Father, Lover, Friend. Even the common appetites of our nature are constantly employed to remind us of

our need of Him. If we hunger, is He not the Bread of Life? If we thirst, is He not the Living Water?

The imagery of the passage from which I have selected my text, gives us a view of the reign of a benignant and gracious sovereign, characterized by peace, plenty and prosperity, such as this world has never seen and never will see, until He comes whose right it is to reign, and to whom the glory shall be given. Some have supposed they should find its fulfilment in the reign of Hezekiah or some good earthly monarch, but he who carefully studies the passage will readily perceive that the language is applicable in its full significance solely to Him who is King in Zion.

By the beautiful figurative language of the text, there is suggested to the imagination, a vast waste, desolate, and dreary desert, across which there wends a lonely traveler plodding wearily on his homeward way, and, as thoughts of his distant home and loved ones there fill his heart, he suddenly hears a strange, dreaded sound, which betokens the coming tempest; he hears the roar of the wind and sees in the distance great clouds of billowy dust rapidly approaching him, and threatening to become at once his winding-sheet and tomb. He sees, he shudders, he despairs, and, as he stands awaiting his doom, he beholds in the distance a rock, elevating its beneficent head above the howling tempest. The sight nerves him to further effort, and on he hastens until he reaches its friendly shelter, and safe under its protection, he listens to the raging tempest as it rushes wildly past, and when the danger is over, rejoicing in his safety, he blesses God for his deliverance, and gladly hastens on his way.

Within the compass of the text there is a slight change in the metaphor. We have the same wide desert wilderness, and the same lonely traveler, but the storm is heard no more. There is a calm, dead, terrible, and overpowering. The brazen heavens above him shed fiercely down intolerable day, and the intense heat drinks his spirit up. Thirsty and faint, he gives up and lies down to die. His senses are quickened by suffering, and he hears or thinks he hears the ripple of a little streamlet, which, like the voice of God, nerves him to further effort. He drags his weary limbs to the same beneficent rock, and there finds a cool and refreshing shadow, and a spring of pure water bubbling at its base, at which he slakes his thirst and bathes his heated brow, blesses God for the double boon and presses on towards his distant home.

Such is the figure. The fact is this: Every child of God has, in their earthly life, a varied experience of calm and storm, of cloud and sunshine, of trial and of triumph, but it is the privilege of every believer to know that the covert and the shade and

the spring are ever near.' From the beautiful metaphorical language of the text, we propose to preach unto you Jesus, who is the only covert from the tempest, and who alone can be as a river of water in a thirsty land.

For the purpose of brevity and that we may have a clearer understanding of the subject, I propose to present Him to you to-night under these two aspects: *First.*—As a Rock of Refuge, or a place of perfect safety. *Second.*—As a River of Refreshment, or a source of constant supply. We say,—

First: Christ as a Rock is a refuge from the tempest of the Divine indignation and wrath. That is a very solemn, profoundly impressive and terrible thought, the wrath of God! The idea is disliked and disbelieved by many, but scripture and history, conscience and observation all agree in attesting the fact that a world lying in wickedness is a world under wrath; and that the soul that sinneth must die. This awful truth is attested by the records of the last six thousand years. Let that mighty deluge that swept the world as the agent of God's displeasure; let the smoking and charred ruins of the cities of the plain; let the bleached bones of a whole generation scattered over the wilderness tell what an awful thing is the anger of a just and holy God! Let the innumerable multitudes that have died during the past ages, and those that are passing away every day to the dark and lonesome grave, declare that we are consumed by the Divine anger. But it were better to quote a few words of God Himself, which in all their plainness and simplicity, are more overwhelmingly impressive than any description, however graphic, or any picture, however appaling, of the nature or the effects of sin and its consequent punishment. I will give you, first, the words of Him who spake as never man spake, whose lips were ever full of grace and truth, and whose heart overflowed with sympathy, tenderness and love. How touching and tender were the accents that usually fell from His lips, aud yet listen to these words: "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life." A grand gospel, full of glorious hope and promise. Men have not a word to say against that, but they stop in the middle of the verse, for Christ adds: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God"—*shall* come? No, no. Many would fain put off the evil day, but the words are "the wrath of God abideth on him." My dear hearers, that is a burden too heavy for any man to carry or for any human soul to bear, and it is only because we can preach to you that it has been borne for you, that there is any hope for you at all. "The wrath of God abideth on him." Think of it! Lying down on your pillows and the wrath of God upon you! Rising from your beds, crushed beneath this awful weight! Is it any wonder that your hearts are

sad, your being warped, your souls miserable? As well may plants live without the light of the sun as the human soul live and be glad, or joyous, or hopeful, or happy under the wrath of God! Hearken to what the Apostle Paul says to the Romans: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." Must I pollute God's atmosphere with the foul breath of impiety, blasphemy, or profanity, to be an ungodly man? No; if we have spent an hour or a day without the consciousness of the Divine presence and providence and power; if we have spent this day without reference to the Divine service and glory, then, whatever be our external morality and outward respectability, notwithstanding all of our social joys and domestic bliss, we are ungodly men. A godless man! Sad is it for a man to be homeless, friendless or, worst of earthly bereavements, motherless, but sadder far to be godless, Christless and hopeless.

Then what does unrighteousness mean? Must a man steal or rob, be guilty of arson, burglary or some other nefarious crime to be deemed unrighteous? Must a man's name be associated with jobbery, trickery and chicanery; with dishonest dealings, fraudulent practices, or usurious exactions, before he can be charged with unrighteousness? No; every time you swerve from God's holy law, every time you do injury, even in thought as well as in deed, to the rights, feelings or interests of your neighbor, you are unrighteous. The law of God is exceedingly broad. Its demands reach to the very depths of the human experience and life. Apply this law to your own conscience and heart, and say, if you dare or can, that you are clean every whit. And yet, against all ungodliness and all unrighteousness, the wrath of God is revealed. Again, Paul uses language of tremendous significance. He says, "But after thy hardness and impenitent hearts, treasurest up wrath against the day of wrath,"—heaping up wrath in heaven at the bar of God. What an awful accumulation must that be against a poor sinful soul that, for five, fifteen, or it may be fifty years has trampled upon the blood of the everlasting covenant, done despite unto the Spirit of Grace, and rejected God's salvation! Turn to the second epistle to the Thessalonians, at the first chapter, and you will find from the first to the seventh verse, awful words used. Once more the apostle writes to the Thessalonians: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on all them,"—on whom? The vile, the ungodly, the outcast, the miserable denizens of the gutter or the prison? Oh no, that is not what it says at all. That may be very true, but it is not the language of the apostle. His language is "against all them that

know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." My dear brother and sister, I don't charge you with violating every command of the decalogue, or with all the vile catalogue of sins and crimes that disgrace and degrade our nature. Not at all. I only ask you, do you know God as your father? Do you obey the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, then rest with us, says the apostle, but if not, then let God be true and every man a liar. Christ is coming to take vengeance, and what that vengeance means, we cannot tell, and would not if we could. We know something of the wondrous depth of His love and the infinitude of His grace when He poured out His soul unto death for us, but the great day of His wrath—the wrath of the Lamb, will come and who then shall be able to stand? Do not misunderstand the teaching of God's Word; it tells us that the great, the mighty, the loving God, whose heart is full of tenderness and pity, long-suffering, slow to anger, waiting to forgive, is to all out of Christ, a consuming fire. Now can we for one moment doubt what should be our duty if a refuge is provided to which we can flee and escape such terrible consequences? Such a refuge, my dear hearers, is provided. The Father hath sent forth His Son—the God-man—to redeem the world, to reconcile us to Himself! He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Nothing is more wonderful in the whole scheme of redemption than that God, who knows us all, and knows us thoroughly, should be so patient, so long-suffering, so ready and willing to forgive, though we have rebelled so often against Him.

Though His own well-beloved Son has been rejected and despised again and again by you, He still waits to be gracious. The long-suffering forbearance of God is the most marvelous manifestation of His grace. But the tempest of His anger is borne along on the wings of time, and it will overtake every ungodly, every impenitent and every unsaved soul. Oh flee ye, dear hearers, as prisoners of hope, to the Rock that is cleft to take you in! "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, oh house of Israel?" If it be asked how the Lord Jesus Christ is a refuge to the poor, awakened, fear-stricken sinner, I would suggest the illustration of my text. How did the rock prove a defence against the pitiless pelting storm for the man who stood behind it? Simply by coming between him and it. The storm poured its relentless fury upon the rock, and the traveler was saved. So it is with the mysterious but glorious doctrine of substitution. The Lord laid upon Him the iniquities of us all. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. To every sinner this refuge is open to-night, and you are urged to flee into it. If you are children of God, you are safe within the shelter of this glorous

refuge. If you are not the children of God, there is a fearful looking for of fiery indignation, and an awful apprehension of the future casting its dark shadow before, which quenches the light of life in all your souls. But "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Those who accept Christ as their substitute are saved with an everlasting salvation. Once the slaves of sin and servants of Satan, they are now the children of God, heirs of glory and fellow heirs with Christ. The cross of Christ is the Rock of Refuge, and every poor sinner that stands to-night under its shadow is saved from the wrath of God threatened against all transgressors.

He is also a rock of refuge from the storm of earthly troubles. Now these are of two kinds. They may either be those of a general public nature, in which all are involved, or those of a private and personal character peculiar to yourselves.

1. *In public distress:*—All around us lie the elements of a moral convulsion swift and terrible as the winds of the wilderness, and seasons of calamity and trial spring from many causes. Such a time of trouble is described by David in the forty-sixth psalm when he speaks of the mountains being carried into the midst of the sea, yet says he, "We will not fear: God is our refuge and strength." Our Lord also speaks to His disciples of the "distress of nations with perplexity; and of men's hearts failing for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth;" yet he adds, "In patience possess ye your souls, be not terrified," nor were they, when times came which tried their constancy and courage. Bravely and heroically they met the prejudice, the power and the persecution of the world arrayed against them for the sake of Christ. They faithfully bore their testimony and fearlessly sealed it with their blood, because they rested on the Rock, and believed on Him who gave them strength to bear and do all that was required of them.

We, too, live in times wherein there may be trouble, as there has been in the recent past in our own land, and as exists to-day in other lands. We have no guarantee that some public calamity or general misfortune, may not come to test us as a nation—a time of terrible trial and suffering. In such days, is it the character of our institutions, grand and noble as they are, is it the wisdom of our statesmen and eloquence of our orators, or the bravery of our soldiers to which we are to look for refuge and safety, for consolation and hope? Nay, but to the Man of whom my text speaks, who sits at God's right hand. He is wise and true, faithful and strong, and He is head over all things to the church, which is His body, and all things, therefore, are constrained to work out His glorious will. Let a man have a vigorous grasp of that one truth, let him submit himself to the

all-triumphant sceptre of Jesus Christ, and to the quenchless love of His wondrously tender heart, and he may be serene and strong when other men tremble and despair. "Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

2. Besides these general trials that may come upon us, there are private and personal ones, which are hard to endure. Every soul knows its own bitterness, bows beneath its own burden of sorrow, feels intensely its own peculiar cravings, and bears its own load of care. He in whom we believe, and whose glorious gospel we preach, was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and it is the lot of God's children, many times in this world, to endure hardness as good soldiers. Is it personal sickness? Is it pinching poverty? Is it heavy losses? Is it blighted hopes? Have friends proved false or have they been removed? Does undeserved obloquy and malicious persecution follow you? Then do not despair; for naught has befallen you that has not befallen Him whom ye call Lord and Master. He has borne it, so may you. You can go to Him in all such times of affliction and distress, and tell Him all your griefs, and be strengthened by the assurance "as thy day so shall thy strength be." God's grace shall be sufficient for thee and He will supply thy every need. The Lord Jesus is a rock of refuge in times of personal distress, to which we may flee for succor. "Keep me as the apple of the eye; hide me under the shadow of Thy wings. The Lord is my rock and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust."

We proceed to our second general topic, viz: that the Lord Jesus Christ, in my text, and in the gospel, is presented, not only as a Rock of Refuge, a place of perfect safety, but as a River of refreshment, a source of unfailing supply. *First*, He is a river of refreshment when we are weary with the vanity and unsatisfactory nature of all earthly things. The human heart longs for happiness. Like the horse-leech, its continual cry is "give, give!" Nothing in this world can satisfy its insatiable desire. It has explored all the regions of sense, of imagination and affection, but in vain. The unsatisfied hunger of the heart, the unslaked thirst of the soul, destroys all peace and precludes happiness. It is a grand thing, our noblest distinction, that we have been created by God with capacities which no worldly object can satisfy and which nothing else but the love of God can fill. But if we have not found God, how hard and desperate is the struggle after happiness and peace, and how indefatigable the endeavor to find what will satisfy the longings of the heart. Men have sought their chief good in various objects, in pleasure, in possessions, in scientific inquiry, in subtle speculation, in sublime phi-

losophy, in literature and art, in fame and influence and power, but all have failed. An experiment of that kind was made long ago on a most magnificent scale. You will find a record of it in the second chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes. The royal preacher exhausted all the resources of knowledge, wealth, power, fame and pleasure, and declares, at last, that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. There are few men in this world who have not tried the experiment for themselves, and there has never been one who has succeeded in satisfying the yearnings of the soul with the things of the present world. All those things which appear so attractive and for which we strive so hard, are but delusions. Let me refer, by way of illustration, to the experience of a traveler on the desert. He is weary and thirsty, toiling along under the heat of the burning sun, and suddenly he sees afar off what seems to be the sparkling waters of a lakelet, into whose bosom he hopes to cast his weary limbs, and with whose limpid waters he will quench his thirst. Inspired by the prospect he hastens on with renewed strength, but when he reaches the place which promised so fair, he discovers it was only a mirage, nothing more, while the heat is more intense and the thirst more intolerable. So it is with those who have tried the experiment of satisfying the wants of the human soul with the things of this world. They may be eminently successful in the pursuit of the objects which they have in view, but when they have obtained possession of them, they find that they utterly fail to bring satisfaction and contentment to the heart. Not long ago I heard a man in this city say, "When I entered life, I gave my heart to business, and I have been successful far beyond my most sanguine hopes, but now I am an old man, and what does it amount to?" Yes, what does it all amount to, when the evil days come and the years draw nigh when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them, when the grasshopper becomes a burden and desire fails, and when the possession of wealth and influence and all the things which the world deems essential to happiness, can bring to the hungry, weary soul, no satisfaction or joy! It would be wise for us to take heed of such experiences and understand that however earnest and indefatigable our efforts may be, and however great may be our success, it is impossible for the human soul, created in God's likeness, ever to be satisfied without Him, and we bless Him for it. There is an ancient fable, which may serve still further to illustrate my meaning:—the golden apples which hung in the garden of Hesperides. These apples were the Australia or California of the ancients, guarded with such peculiar care that it was almost impossible for any one to discover and secure them. Still one after another would strive to reach the wall and scale it, although they walked through long lines of whitened bones that

spoke of the failure of previous attempts. At last one gets a little nearer than the others, and ultimately reaches the wall, and by one desperate clutch grasps the fruit. What then? Dust and ashes only in his hand! What does it amount to? Eminent position has been attained, millions have been accumulated, fame the most widespread has been acquired. What is it? Dust and ashes in the skeleton hand, that is all! Let us understand, if we are to be permanently happy and peaceful in this world, we must seek after the things of God, for He alone can satisfy the wants of the human soul. Compared with such a possession, everything else is as nothing.

Second.—But not only have we a source of comfort when we are discouraged, baffled, disappointed and distressed; not only have we something which will satisfy to the uttermost, the wants of the soul, we have more. We have a river of refreshment in times of weariness and exhaustion from the sorrows and trials of life. Now, it is perfectly obvious that it is not the purpose of God to take His children out of this sinful world as soon as they are converted. They are left here for a wise purpose, to glorify their God; to be trained and disciplined into higher spiritual excellence, and for extended usefulness in the service of their great Master. While here they are subject to the ills to which our flesh is heir, and are exposed to some troubles peculiar to themselves. In the providence of God trials come upon all; and sometimes in the hour of weariness and despondency, when the way is long and the heat oppressive; when friendless and shelterless and alone, the child of God may be fearful lest he may fail after all. But fear not; do not believe it for one moment. In your weariness and weakness and loneliness, it may seem to you that God has hid His face from you and you walk in darkness. It may be that personal affliction has come upon you; that those who are dearer to you than your own life are passing away; that that dear cherub face on which you have looked with ineffable delight is growing thinner every day, that the eyes that brightened at your coming become more and more sunken, and other unmistakable signs tell you that God has sent for your darling boy. Or it may be, that the son upon whom you had set your heart and your hopes is disobedient and unfilial, dissolute and depraved. There are some sorrows that are sorer than death. But, whatever may be your sorrow, suffering child of God, go to Jesus in penitence and prayer, and tell Him the story of your grief. Recall His wondrous mercy and compassion, and His still more wondrous love. The same Jesus lives and loves and sympathizes with you now, that blessed the lives of those among whom He lived in the days when He walked the earth; the same Jesus, who, with infinite tenderness, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the lepers,

cast out devils, and who wept at the tomb of Lazarus and brought him forth to life once more. Go to Him, and touch, if it were but the hem of His robe, and then will thy languid pulse beat with a healthier throb, and thy nerveless spirit thrill with new life and peace and strength. Jesus hears, Jesus succors, Jesus saves. How strong have been the souls of thousands of God's people, even in the very midst of the fiery furnace, for close by their side stood One whose form was like unto the Son of God. Though no other eye has seen Him, yet when His children have been passing through the fire, He has been with them. What was it that the first martyr for Christ saw amid the pitiless pelting of murderous stones? Through them he saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing there. So it is to-day with God's children. The trials and afflictions that come upon them are sent by the hand of infinite love, and they work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. This Book is full of instances where God has succored and protected His children in times of sore trouble and distress. Hagar, in the wilderness, was comforted and relieved by the loving hand of God. The widow's cruise of oil was replenished by the Bountiful Benefactor, who provides for the wants of His children. Peter saw the Saviour coming on the water, and asked that he might be permitted to walk to Him on that liquid floor. The waves were very high, and beginning to sink, he cried "Lord, save me, or I perish!" and Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him out. If you cannot swim when the water of affliction and trial encompass you, you can cry, "Lord, save," and the hand of the Lord will be outstretched for your deliverance. A poor woman, who had suffered for many years with a sore affliction and could obtain no relief, pressed her way through the throng, and touched the hem of His garment, and was immediately healed. It was the touch that did it. He knew it, she knew it, whether the world knew it or not. Whether the disciples rebuked her or not made very little difference. She knew she was healed. So when trials and sufferings and sorrow are upon us, God will give us strength in our weakness; and, by-and-bye, we shall sit by His side on His throne, as He sits with the Father upon His throne. Is not then, the Lord Jesus Christ a rock of refuge, and are not they perfectly safe who trust in Him? Is He not a river,—not a mere reservoir whose contents may become exhausted—but a river, whose living waters regale and refresh our weary hearts; and whose supplies are as unfailing as the Eternal Throne!

But, though the story is not half told, I must hasten to a conclusion. Whom did the rock shelter from the tempest? Only the man that got behind it, and nobody else. Suppose that traveler should stand, and say, "I don't believe it is a rock at all; or

even if it is, I don't believe it is accessible ; and if it is accessible, I don't believe I can get to it; I am exhausted now, I can go no further ; I can never get there." If the man had thus stood and reasoned with himself until the storm overtook him, and he had been overwhelmed and buried, whose fault would it have been? Or if the thirsty traveler in the desert seeing the streamlet in the distance and hearing its murmur, should stop, and say, "I doubt whether it is water, it may only be white sand glittering in the sunlight, a mere delusion,—nothing more ; or if it is water, it may be brackish and I cannot drink it ; or if it is good water, there are others there now, and they will drink it all ; or if they do not, I am exhausted, and can go no further." If the poor, doubting, captious man had perished of thirst, whose fault would it have been? Now the application is plain. You may believe that Jesus died to save the lost. You may believe that He has saved countless thousands in glory and on earth. You may see others saved by drinking the water of life ; but you drink not yourselves, and your thirst is not slaked. You are dying of thirst, dear hearers ; this river of life will flow rippling on, as full and as free as it has ever done, and thousands will drink and be satisfied with the water of life. The musical murmurs of its waters will still delight thirsty and weary souls, but you may not be there to hear it. The gospel will be just as free to-morrow as it is to-day, but you may not be there to be invited. Save us, oh, God of mercy, from incurring the awful responsibility of rejecting the Saviour and neglecting His salvation! Better you had never been born, than to have heard of this Rock of Refuge and this River of Refreshment, and neither hie thee to the one nor drink of the other. May God lead us all to the Rock that is higher than we. May we, to-night, seek safety and refreshment in the Lord Jesus Christ. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER XXII.

JESUS KNOCKETH, KNOCKETH AT THY DOOR.

SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM LLOYD, OF THE WASHINGTON SQUARE M. E. CHURCH, ON THURSDAY, SEPT. 14, 1876.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."—*Rev. iii.*, 20.

It is a night of perfect beauty. Not a sound breaks the calm save the soft music of the night wind as it breathes through the trees, awakening music sweet as the chords of an Æolean harp. The moon is just arching over a distant cloud, and reveals to our view a once magnificent, but now dismantled mansion. The door is fast closed, and around its lintels clings the tendrils of the poison ivy, while the pathway is choked with nettles and deadly weeds. Before that barred door stands a Man of majestic aspect, clothed in sacradotal vestments, His royal mantle clasped by the priestly breast-plate. In His hand is the lamp of truth, the light from which reveals the desolation that reigns around. He raises the knocker upon the door, and as the sound echoes through hall and room, He cries: "Behold! I stand at the door and knock." There is no response. We wait in vain to catch the sound of bolts withdrawn; yet still amid the rank hemlock and the falling night dews, stands that Kingly Suppliant pleading for admission into the house barred in His face. Thus has the great painter, Holman Hunt, embodied upon canvas the matchless and impressive allegory of my text. The truth designed to be set before us here, is the contact with, and influence upon the human soul of Christ Jesus our Lord. That mansion, once so fair but now almost in ruins, is your soul. Long has the door, while opening readily to others, been closed against your Lord, while habits of sin like the stem of the poison ivy cling closely about your heart. To-night, Christ Jesus stands, and through the inner chambers of your being sends the appeal, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

This beautiful figure does not lessen, but rather enhances the force of the appeal. This earnest entreaty was first made to the Laodicean church. Clothed in the flaunting finery of material wealth, and decked in the gilded happiness of a boastful self-sufficiency, they regarded themselves as rich, and in need of nothing, while in the eyes of the great Head of the Church they were utterly impoverished; and their gaudy clothing but masked beggary and nakedness.

To these doors came the Son of God, laden with true riches and heavenly vestments. From house to house He passes, crying, "Buy of Me;" offering them the tried gold which would alone stand the fire; the white raiment washed in His own blood, which no earthly loom could weave; healing balms for the sin-sick soul which no other laboratory could distill.

But in vain did He lift up His pleading voice On He goes, from street to street, until the evening shadows fall. The darkness deepens; and still He is seen standing before the doors of the dwellings, and the streets echo with the appeal: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." But in vain; the morning breaks and the last call dies away, and the Suppliant departs. Morning breaks, and upon every house is written the doom of the dweller there. Christ had knocked at the door, but had knocked in vain.

So, my hearers, Christ stands before you to-night. In His right hand is length of days, and in His left hand riches and honor. With all the grace and healing and blessedness you need He stands knocking, knocking, knocking at the door of your heart.

I. CHRIST'S CONTACT WITH THE SOUL.—"Behold, I stand!" This is expressive of constant contact. He does not occasionally visit you, make a faint impression upon your heart, and then for a time leave you untouched. He is ever present; always standing at the door, ready to enter the moment the bolts are withdrawn. There are three thoughts suggested by this:

1.—*Christ's deep love for the soul.*

The Word of God asserts that the interests of the soul are pre-eminent, and of the first importance. Upon this the value of Divine revelation rests. It comes to us revealing the nature, the value, and the destiny of the individual soul. Its aim is to lift men out of the dominion of the sensual and visible laws, and bring them under the power of the spiritual laws of the world to come. Therefore, it states, and repeatedly enforces the value of the soul above all that is material. Men, while they acknowledge this, do not act upon their acknowledgement. The present is an age of practical materialism. All our energies are centred in the schemes and attainments of the present life. To amass wealth, gain positions, or wield power over others, are the objects sought

and pursued with the greatest zest. Education is largely devoted to fitting men for success in the present life, with but little, if any, regard to the future. The soul's eternal interests, men seem to think, will either take care of themselves, or can be settled by a few prayers when the last sand of life is running out, and death, with cold hands, is tugging at the heart's last rending chords. But not so does God regard man and his destiny. The soul is in the eyes of God of priceless value. Language is altogether too poor to describe it. "Comparisons, however striking, are in vain."

He who fashioned every part of the material universe, from the mightiest orb to the smallest flower; whose power enriched its caves with precious stones, and veined its rocks with gold; He who knows all that its combined wealth can procure, has settled the question of the soul's superior value in the words, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Yes, Christ understood its value and saw its imminent peril. He knows its capabilities, its powers, its relations, its interminable history. He saw the lost in sin and guilt bartering away immortal joy for present gratification. The love He felt for the soul brought Him down to earth to seek and save it —save it by entering it Himself and making it His permanent home, enriching it with His grace and covering its nakedness with His own seamless robe. The incarnation was the expression of His deep concern for the salvation of man. That strange three-and-thirty years that lay between the manger and the cross were lived in order that He might come into living contact with the soul. The birth, the baptism, the temptation, the agony, the death of Jesus are the expressions of His deep concern for the soul. Every pang of woe that the presence of evil caused to shoot through His spotless soul; every tear that fell down His marred visage; every thrill of horror that He endured in the dark hour of Gethsemane; every drop of blood that trickled from His thorn-crowned brow, or gushed from His hands and side; the unutterable grief that swept in surging billows over Him when He rent the darkened heavens with the cry, "Eloi!" all blend to-night to give emphasis to the words of my text: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

2.—*Christ's marvellous condescension.*

The annals of our earth are not destitute of many instances of noble condescension. We have read of monarchs who have laid aside the stately emblems of rank, and entered unknown the huts of wretchedness and the haunts of crime. Tales linger in

our memory of noble men and women who have dried the orphan's tears, and made glad the stricken widows' hearts; who, to uplift and bless the down-trodden and oppressed have chosen to share their lot, flinging the mantle of their charity over the shivering forms of the naked, and the plumed head has bent very gracefully over the head of the sufferer, and the jewelled hand has blanched to a heavenlier whiteness, as it beckoned struggling people into freedom. Our hearts thrilled, and the hearts of millions beside, who read the story of the brave man whose heart yearned over the West Indian slave, and who, when he found that to preach Christ to them, he must become a slave himself, signed the contract for his own bondage, and bared his back to the task-master's lash. This Book tells us of angels who laid aside their harps and left their thrones that they might fan the clammy brow of the dying beggar, and then bear his spirit upward to Abraham's bosom. But all these deeds of love and condescension fade away beside the condescension of our Lord standing at the door of the sinner's heart. O, who can measure the distance between the throne of the universe and the sin-stained threshold of a soul! As the glory of this Being of beings, who pleads for admission to your soul, flashed upon the surprised prophets, even lips touched with living fire faltered and failed. He who was the Shiloh whose royalty illumined Jacob's dying bed; the Star whose lustre fell across the fast darkening horizon of Balaam; the Lion of Judah, the tread of whose feet shook the cedars; David's Lord, Isaiah's Immanuel, Jeremiah's Branch, Haggai's Desire of all nations, Malachi's Sun of Righteousness dropping healing from His wings; He, in fact, of whom all the prophets bear witness; who by the word of His mouth built up the universe, reared every arch and pillar of nature's temple, hanging stars in its roof for altar lamps, while its thousand voices ring an eternal peal to His praise—He stands at the door of the vilest sinner's heart to-night. O, behold Him, the mighty God; the Prince of peace—Heaven's crowned and adored King, standing, His head bared to the pitiless storm, pleading at the sinner's heart, while the voice that spake a world from naught, cries, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

3.—*Christ's unwearying patience.*

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock" as though He would say: Though long rejected, yet I stand.

Since the creation of the world He has been standing at the door of human hearts. He stood at the door of the antideluvians and never left them until they utterly refused to admit Him, and then destruction came and swept them away as with a flood. He has stood, and is now standing, at the door of every unopened

heart in this assembly. The kindest earthly friend would have departed long ago. Young man, old man, He has stood at your door for many years and still He stands. He waiteth to be gracious. Oh, had He knocked but once, and, when refused, left us to all the horror of a hopeless, Christless eternity, it would have been but just. But wonderful patience, He yet stands there.

II.—Christ's influence upon the soul.

He *knocks!* By this strong figure I understand the impression of Divine appeals and claims upon the soul by the Holy Spirit. When our Lord ascended, He gave the promise of the Holy Ghost, and declared, "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." In our worldliness we fail to notice the pleading Saviour who stands waiting at the door; then the Spirit, in some way or other, enforces our attention, as a knock, echoing through a house, arouses its inmates. Christ knocks by the Holy Spirit's influence. In various ways, and by many entrances, does Christ approach and appeal to the soul. In harmony with the figure of the text, I may say, the soul has many doors, and Christ knocks at them all. He knocks by His Word. "Is not My Word a hammer," saith the Lord, "that breaketh the rocks in pieces?" This Word strikes differently upon different characters. By it Christ knocks at the door of the intellect. Truths which the mind vainly seeks elsewhere, and without the knowledge of which it cannot rest, are here plainly revealed. Some men can only be reached by these truths. The way into the soul lies through the vaulted chambers of reason only. Their hearts can be only got at through their heads. Others need to be aroused and alarmed, and by the solemn, awful truths of Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell, Christ knocks at the door of fear. Blow after blow falls until the citadel trembles at the shock. Oh, there are many who will never admit Christ until they are made to tremble as did Felix—to quail awe-stricken and white-lipped with terror at the awful results of keeping Him out. To others He appears radiant with a transcendant loveliness, and, charmed with His beauty, they hasten to let down every bar and admit Him; while others are won by the revelations of Heaven's glories, and hope turns the key, and the Master enters. By all these doors Christ seeks to enter, and at each He stands knocking by the terrors or the allurements, the threatenings or promises of His Word. By that Word He knocks now. Oh, I am so glad that I have not in my own feeble strength, and with my frail words, to plead alone, or wrench the bolts from your hearts. It is not the preacher but the Word which must do the work. When the call to arms peals over an host, it is not the bugler, but the clearness and mirthfulness of the bugle note that will thrill every heart and stiffen

every sinew for the strife. To-night I put my lips to the gospel trumpet and blow with all my might the call to every sinner to repent. Oh, may the sound be clear and certain! To-night I take up the hammer of the Word and bring it down upon the barred door of your soul and cry for my Master, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

Again, Jesus knocks by special providences. It is true that every day with its general care and rich blessings, calls upon men to open their hearts and receive Christ, but this fails and He knocks more loudly by special providences. For example, the knock comes by sickness. It is difficult for us to realize when in perfect health, that in a single day we may be laid aside, to languish, droop, and die. Often because man will not listen and open the door in health, Christ lays him aside. The health and strength which had been the man's trust, and had been squandered, suddenly fails. You will go home from the store, or from your desk, and say to your friends: "I don't feel well to-night." The morning comes and your head throbs and burns with fever. The physician is called. The fever leaps like fire through your veins. The wife looks at you with eyes full of heart-break, the children hush their prattle, and tread softly on the stairs. In the anxious eye of the physician you read "Danger." Eternity looms up and flings a shadow over the bed. In the silence of that hushed home, the cry is heard "Prepare to meet thy *God!*" While the answer comes, "Lord, spare me a little longer; I cannot meet Thee as I *am*. O, let me live, and my life shall be Thine." Ah, has He not knocked thus at some hearts here? Have you kept your vow? Is Christ in your heart? If not, O, let down the bars and admit Him now.

Again the knock comes, and this time by a bereavement. Often this is the loudest knock of all. Our earthly loves are not offensive to God. Having given us the capacity to love, the lawful exercise of it is well-pleasing to Him. The deeper trust, and fonder, our love for our friends, the better pleased God is. But when our love for earthly beings reigns supreme; when they are enthroned rivals, keeping Christ out of the heart, then they are often suddenly swept from our embrace. O, there are many to whom such knockings have come! You have seen some loved one indicate disease. You have seen it spread rapidly until all hope vanished. You wait till morning breaks, but it breaks upon a still, pulseless form. *Jesus knocks*; then comes the coffin and you see the form robed for the tomb. *Jesus knocks;* you follow it to the grave and as the clods rattle hollowly upon the casket, *Jesus knocks.* You return home, but the silence of the house, the absence of the merry voice which used to fill the

house with glee, but is now hushed in the grave, drapes your heart in still heavier gloom. By the memory of those little ice-cold fingers *Jesus knocks*. O, I entreat you listen as that pleading voice cries again to-night, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

III.—CHRIST'S DEMAND TO THE SOUL, OPEN THE DOOR.

I cannot dwell upon this. The hour for the service is well nigh past. Suffer just a word. There is a limit to Christ's action upon the soul. He will knock, plead, entreat for admittance, but He will never force an entrance. The door to the soul is guarded by free agency. You must open the door. You must receive Christ or He will never dwell therein.

Open the door, and He will make your heart His home. "Will God, in very deed, dwell with man upon the earth?" questioned the prophet; and all humanity waits the reply. *Listen*. From the pavilion of the Lord Jehovah, comes the reply: "With that man will I dwell, who is poor, and of a contrite spirit." Again, I say, *Open the door*. You can admit none greater. It is the Kind of Kings who knocks. *Open the door*, for the last knock will be given. When that pleading Voice ceases to plead, "WHAT THEN?" Admit Christ into your heart, and He will admit you into His Home. When life is over, and earth's doors close upon you, and the gates of the grave clang behind you, you will find heaven's everlasting doors open to let you in. Jesus still lingers. Oh, Spirit of God, stay a little longer! Knock, O, Christ, once again with Thy nail-pierced hand! Let down the bars, O soul.

In the silent midnight watches,
List thy bosom door,—
How it knocketh, knocketh, knocketh,
Knocketh evermore.
Say not 'tis thy pulses beating;
'Tis thy heart of sin,
'Tis thy Saviour knocks and crieth,
"Rise, and let Me in!"

Death comes on with reckless footsteps,
To the hall and hut;
Think you death will tarry knocking
Where the door is shut?
Jesus waiteth, waiteth, waiteth,
But the door is fast;
Grieved, away thy Saviour goeth,
Death breaks in at last.

Then 'tis time to stand entreating
Christ to let thee in;
At the gate of heaven beating,
Waiting for thy sin.
Nay, alas, thou wretched creature,
Hast thou then forgot?
Jesus waited long to know thee;
Now He knows thee not.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NOT YET.

SERMON BY THE REV. CHARLES F. DEEMS, D.D., OF THE CHURCH OF THE STRANGERS, N. Y., ON WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 20, 1876.

"Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, this people say, the time is not come, the time that the Lord's House should be built."—*Haggai i.*, 2.

The history of this case is this:

The Jews had been carried away into Babylon as captives, their city having been sacked and their civil and religious polity totally suspended. In that captivity they lacked the moral influence of the prophets. Those extraordinary messengers, which God had vouchsafed to them and their fathers from time to time, came no more amongst them.

It was not until about eighteen years after they returned to the Holy Land that God sent such men as Haggai and Zechariah to rekindle the flames of zeal and holy effort. The Babylonish captivity had been terminated by the overthrow of Babylon by the Persian, Cyrus, who, on coming to full possession of the empire, published a decree setting the Jewish people free, permitting them to return to their own country, and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. He sent with them many of the sacred vessels which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had brought out of the temple in Jerusalem, and placed in the temple of his god Bel. Cyrus, furthermore, issued letters recommending the governors of the various provinces to render the Jews assistance in rebuilding their city and their holy house. It is said that 50,000 people took advantage of this decree to assemble at Jerusalem.

Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, who was of the royal family, and of Joshua, who was of the priestly family, the good

work began. They reinstituted their feasts. They put up a temporary altar. They made great collections of money and great outlay to bring together the requisite stones and timbers. In the second year they laid the foundation of the temple with great pomp, the apparelled priests with trumpets and the Levites with cymbals leading the people in their songs and shouts.

But all things did not go forward swimmingly. Enemies arose, jealous neighbors who were ready to obstruct their work, who, although they could not annul the decree of Cyrus, could weaken the hands and frustrate the purposes of the people of Judah. This they did through the whole reign of Cyrus, in which the work went on slowly, and they obtained from his successor authority to suspend the rebuilding, and from the next king, who was a usurper, a total prohibition. That prohibition expired with the death of the usurper.

Then arose Haggai and Zechariah, urging the people to resume the work. But they had become so engrossed in their own affairs, and had become so apathetic toward religion and the temple, that these zealous prophets had great difficulty in bringing them around to their duty. Although Darius, the son-in-law of Cyrus, and now occupying the throne, had issued another decree, confirming the favorable edict of Cyrus, and giving the Jews large encouragement and help, they made divers excuses for their lack of devotion. They had begun to discover arithmetical pretexts for their postponement. It was not yet time to build the Lord's House. The prophet Jeremiah had predicted that it would be seventy years from the destruction of the temple to the time it should be rebuilt: so they interpreted the prophecy in which Jeremiah had said, "this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

I cannot forbear stopping in this recital to call attention to the different effects of the reading of the scriptures upon different minds. These very prophecies had stirred up Daniel, in Babylon, to press his prayers at God's mercy-seat for the deliverance of his people. It was enough for him that the time was drawing near. Any intimation he could gather of God's favorable purpose he was ready to press into the plea of his prayer. But when freedom came, and these people might rebuild the temple, they took these very words of the prophet and began to cipher on them to see if they could prove that Haggai and Zachariah were in too great a hurry, and that the people may take more time in house-building and money-making before they need revive the temple question. In all ages of the world men have been found of this temper—mere calculating machines, or arithmetical interpreters of God's providences.

In our time we have had abundant illustrations of the folly of attempting to settle future events by the slate. It was a plain *duty* which the prophets urged upon these Jews, and they hid themselves behind an arithmetical calculation.

In reading the history of this case, how forcibly there comes to us the conviction that the cause of God, in all ages, suffers more from its professed friends than from its open foes. It will always have foes, it has them now, it always has had. When the Samaritans and other enemies arose against the rebuilding, they would have availed little if the people had stood to their work, and had put forth their intellects to defeat the intrigue of the enemy at the court of the king. It was the selfishness, sloth, carelessness, and apathy of the Jews which caused the work to cease after the foundation had been laid. So it is now. All the outlay of brains and money which the enemies of Christianity make would avail little against its progress if all its professed friends were consistent and devoted; if men were as intent to be in their places in the church as they are to be in their places in the store; if the men of great business talents were as punctual at the meeting of church committees as they are at their appointments in a bank or a Chamber of Commerce; if all the women were as devoted to the cause of the Saviour in their domestic and social circles as they are to their personal comfort and beauty, and to etiquette.

That it may come home to us, let us look at these things. During the past year it rained on one Sunday, and some of us, who are hale, hearty men, some of us who are young men, were absent from God's house. The weather was unfavorable. It rained just as hard on Monday morning, but somehow we all managed to be at our stores, at our banks, in our offices. Do you recollect how it rained on Tuesday night? But a friend of ours was married that night, and we were invited. We all hired carriages to take our wives and daughters to the wedding. It was a foul week, and it rained on Wednesday night. Did you notice that we did not hire carriages to take our wives and daughters to the prayer-meeting?

These comparisons are recalled because they exist between things, all of which are proper. It is proper to be a merchant, a member of a Chamber of Commerce, a bank director. It is proper to take a certain care of one's comfort and beauty, and to study etiquette for the sake of courtesy. None of these things are improper. But *but they are not the very highest concern of an immortal soul.* We do not profess that they are. We *do* profess that our religion is. Now, when our children and clerks and customers and associates see this, it is damaging to them and to the great cause of truth and of Jesus in the world.

It was not the Samaritan intrigue but the Jewish apathy which permitted the temple to lay so long unfinished. Mark! I say Jewish *apathy*, not opposition. The address of the prophet was not to those who did not desire the Lord's house to be built, or who believed that it ought not to be built: it was to those who believed that it ought to be built and must be built, and who greatly wished that it were built, but who said, "Not yet!" The work was to be done at some time: this they all consented to, but that time was *not yet*.

This precisely describes the temper of thousands who crowd our churches in this day. Probably I am addressing hundreds such to-night. Your case, if you be such, is stated in a very few words: *you are orthodox, but inactive:* your inactivity produces disastrous results, from which your orthodoxy cannot save you: your orthodoxy is so sound that it actually lulls you into a false security. From that I desire to arouse you to-night.

I wish to avoid all grounds of difference, and to select a few topics upon which all serious and intelligent attendants on public Christian worship agree, that I may earnestly call attention to the fact that correctness of opinions and ruinousness of conduct may co-exist in the history of the same individual. We shall probably see how close a resemblance there is between much that we do and the course of the Jews to whom Haggai preached.

Notice that they did not deny the existence of God, nor inveigh against religion as a superstition: that they did not deny the propriety and profit of public worship, and the necessity of having a temple. They said, "Jehovah is:" they said, "Jehovah's house is the temple:" they said, "That temple should be built." How entirely correct these opinions were! But they said, "Not yet! the time is not come!" Their sin lay in putting off—not doubtful things, but things they knew were right and good and beautiful, nay *imperative*. The temple must be built: that was a proposition never to be discussed; but the time was an open question. They did not see that a postponement of action, in things that are imperative at the present moment, is a denial by the conduct of that which the intellect affirms and urges. It sets the whole life on a contradiction, which weakens the powers and breaks the influence. And instances of this conflict between the professed opinions and the open conduct of people abound inside the church and outside. Let us consider a few such.

I. There is the subject of *serious attention to one's personal salvation*.

There can be no controversy as to that. Whatever question may arise on a man's duty in other things, no regular and serious attendant on Christian worship—and it is that class I address to-night—will deny that it is a man's duty to give serious attention

to his soul, so that, as much as in him lies, he shall see that it receives no damage from any malign influences in the universe, and shall receive all possible good from all possible sources. Do we not all so thoroughly agree on that, that there is no room for controversy? Nay, can we not increase the circle of believers in that proposition from those who are not regular attendants on Christian worship? Are there not those who irregularly enter churches, who are absorbed in other things, who are seldom quite serious about anything which is not material and capable of having its value stated in currency: and are there not others who are far from leading orderly lives, who, if you put the appeal seriously to them, will not honestly admit that they believe their souls to be their most valuable possessions, and that if they lose their souls nothing will compensate that loss?

And yet, are all those people seeking to keep their souls from harm, and bring in all spiritual benediction? They study their health. They go to sea-shore or mountain or medicinal springs, for physical improvement. They study art and science and literature for mental improvement. And all these things they do while they wholly neglect the culture of the soul, and while they admit that the soul is more than their body, and more valuable than all fortune and all intellectual accomplishments. They *will* attend to this great interest, but *not yet!*

The young man has his "wild oats" to sow, a species of spiritual agriculture he has never seen bring a harvest of greatness or goodness to any other young man. Alas! for that mad sowing! It consumes the time in which the garden of the Lord should be cultivated. The Lord of the vineyard says, "Go work in My vineyard, and what is right that will I pay you." The young man says, "Excuse me: I go into another field, and there I sow my 'wild oats.'" Will it ever pay him? Never. Does he know that? Yes: he ought to know that he who sows the wind must reap the whirlwind. Why does he do it? He believes that later in the day he will go into the Lord's vineyard. He does not deny that he should do so, *sometime*. He professes to believe that only the fruits gathered from that vineyard will endure in the garners of God. He forgets that, having sown his "wild oats," he must stay to reap them, and that there will be no time thereafter.

A young woman professes to believe in the spiritual world, and expects to save her soul at last. But she must have her frivolities. She cannot think of devoting herself to Jesus now. She will *hereafter*. If you should be able to assure her, amid her heartless course of coquetry, that she should never come to Jesus, and never be a Christian, and never have that everlasting life which is the portion of believers, you would petrify her with horror. If you could show her a hard, hopeless, dark-souled old

woman, dying, being ripped off from this life, to which she had glued her soul; if, to that rose-cheeked, cherry-lipped, lily-browed, violet-eyed, beautiful young belle, you could show a sister dying in a cellar-brothel, dying horribly, eaten up of loathsome disease, in utter social and spiritual loneliness, and tell the gay young thing that that lost girl was once as hilarious and fascinating as she, and lived in the same house on the same avenue, and that to that state, or to the condition of the hard old hopeless woman, and to a worse hell beyond, she, the beautiful, must come at last, unless she be a Christian, she could not endure to think that of herself, but would say, "I *must* be saved! I *will* be saved!" "Then be a Christian *now*," would be your response. And her reply would be, "Not yet!"

And there are men of business, whose business tact and sense are very great, who know that there is no merchandise of silver and gold like wisdom, who know that they can obtain riches surpassing all that the mine and the ocean conceal, and *also mean to do it* when they have gathered the small-wares and petty gains of earth But *not now!* There is some undertaking on hand which seems very important to them, some great railroad to be projected, some large bank or insurance company to be inaugurated, some vast land speculation to be engineered. "Great," "large," "vast?" Ask such a man to put these things in comparison with the possible achievements of a forgiven and purified soul, working with Jesus on the fields of eternity, and he will readily admit that these are greater than those: and he means to have these: but *not yet*!

There are men held away from a Christian life by bad habits and bad associations. They know that the fascination of gaming and drinking is most hurtful to their souls. They know that the first act toward a Christian life will be to burst the bonds of these sinful habits, and they know they ought to do so, and they are always intending to do so, but—*not yet!* It does require much moral courage to say to one's associates, "Gentlemen, I must quit the club. The associations here hold me to the vices of gaming and drinking. A Christian's money is Christ's money, and I dare not rob God. A Christian's body is a temple for the Holy Ghost, and I can no longer use mine as the instrument of mere sensual pleasure. And I am going to be a Christian." It *is* hard to do that. I do not see how any man can unless aided by God's Holy Spirit. But it must be done. And men know it. They will, sometime, but—*not yet!*

And thus serious devotion to the work of saving one's soul is postponed by thousands who admit that the duty is paramount and the interest is supreme.

II. "The time is not come" causes also, the postponement of honest self-examination.

Every reasonable man admits that it is of the utmost importance that every man know all about himself. Self-deception does no good. It does not heal a sick man to be ignorant of the fact that he is diseased. It does prevent the adoption of remedial methods. It is always best to know the worst of our affairs, the worst of our health, of our pecuniary condition, of our credit with our fellow men, and, above all, of our spiritual estate.

It is senseless to prefer a brief enjoyment of false security. It unmans us. It often ruins us. But a strictly honest self-examination is painful. It is always a revelation of defects, often of deformities. It is offensive to our selfishness. Who can bear it? It is so much more easy to take a general view of our affairs, and if that does not demonstrate our utter present ruin, we prefer to go on a little longer.

It is that which makes merchants bankrupt. They feel a little uncertain about their affairs, but they will not probe them to the bottom. They extend their operations on the credit of the best aspect of their affairs, instead of building only on a ground they know is theirs. There must come a time when they shall know all. A postponement may make it so that when that knowledge comes it will be of no service in the reparation of their losses or the management of their business. Better for a merchant to know every morning just what he owes and just what he owns, even if it make him contract his business and sacrifice many of his pleasures. Better that than ruin. Better for his comfort, better for his reputation, better for his future operations.

Self-searching would lead to repentance, and faith, and a Christian life; as a surgical operation would, after the pain and the soreness, bring healing and health. But between the present state of the patient and recovery lies that surgical operation. He dreads that. For dread of that he postponeth healing and the health. Just so it is with our souls. We will admit that a man *must*, at some time, know himself to the bottom of his soul, and that this knowledge is to be acquired by self-examination. It must be done, but—*not yet!*

III. This same plea leads us to a postponement of a public confession of Jesus.

When men of thought or sentiment consider the claims of Jesus and His religion, they perceive or feel, generally both, that they are bound by all the ties of honor which bind men to one another to stand by Him who has done more for the race than all other men. Any failure to respect the least wish of this Jesus, who is my greatest benefactor, to whom I am under the greatest possible debt of love, is an ingratitude which sadly damages my manhood. Why should I pride myself on my fidelity to other men if I be unfaithful to this Man? He expressly desires me to

confess Him before men. He asks obedience to all God's moral regulations for His sake, for Jesus' sake. He asks my trust in Him, after displays of omnipotence, and omniscience, and proofs of boundless love by boundless sacrifice. He naturally expects a public acknowledgment of my friendship for Him. It is His due. It is my duty.

This is the belief, as they frankly admit, of thousands of people in Christendom who allow month after month to pass without confessing Jesus. They profess to believe that if they do not confess Him before men, He will renounce them before His Father and the holy angels. They did not intend to submit themselves to that greatest disgrace and ruin. They must therefore, make a public confession of Jesus as their Saviour; and they will—but *not yet!* Not yet! although the judgment-seat may be set for them this night!

IV. Lastly, we come inside the Church. Professed Christians all unite in acknowledging that the greatest things should be done for Jesus.

Why are not those things done by us? Because we are the people that say, "The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." We deny nothing to the Lord in our professions. Our opinions are orthodox enough. There is no denial of right thought, but there is lack of right action. We put off what we know must, at *some* time, be done, but not *this* time.

There are three influences producing in us this injurious spirit of procrastination.

In the first place, we exaggerate the difficulties.

There are always difficulties in every great undertaking, and frequently in smaller enterprises. To postpone the beginning of a great operation because of the difficulties, is no wiser than never to undertake anything that is great. The postponement will not diminish the difficulties. It will always be hard to do anything greater than we have ever done before. To a man with a manly spirit, difficulties provoke resistance and effort.

It was not easy for those fifty thousand Jews to come back from captivity in a distant land, and replant themselves, and begin to rebuild their great temple which had been so splendid a structure, and to rehabilitate their nationality. It was not easy to set themselves against the machination of "the Dinaites and the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over and set in the cities of Samaria," led as they were, by Rebum the chancellor and Shimshai the scribe. These were great difficulties, and men ought always to study the difficulties in any enterprise.

But what had they to bring against these? The decree of Cyrus, their own numbers and strength, and, above all, that God, for whom they were building, who had led their fathers from Egypt, and had overthrown Pharoah, and established His people in the land, and caused wealth to flow in until their king, Solomon, could erect the superb temple in Jerusalem, and who had delivered Daniel from the den of lions, and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the furnace of fire, and had put it into the heart of Cyrus to release them—they had their Jehovah, God of Hosts, to set over against their difficulties.

No, brethren, we are kept from doing great things not because they are great and difficult, for we know that we must do them, but because we exaggerate the difficulties as compared with the resources of Christian faith. To him that believes all things are possible. If possible and obligatory, we should not strive to avoid by postponing.

Another reason is *our covetousness.*

That is the special besetment of Christian people. They cannot commit other sins, because those sins are conspicuous and tell on their consciences, but they can live covetously and no man know it. I have known men expelled from churches for heresy, adultery, lying, theft, and murder, but I never knew one who was excluded for covetousness. If any communicant, in any of our churches, should burn paper to his ancestors as the Chinese do, or set up a Hindoo or an African idol in his house and worship it daily, there is not a church that would not expel him. St. Paul says, "Covetousness is idolatry." A covetous man is as certainly leading a life of sin as a thief or a liar, and is classed by the apostle with those who have forsaken the living God and are worshipping gods that have no life.

We do not like to individualize, but we see that this sin is as general now as it was when Haggai and Zechariah began to thunder on the consciences of the Jews of their day. The time to build the temple had not arrived, they said. They had not grown rich enough. They were too busy with the reconstruction of their private fortunes. But they had plenty of time to send to Lebanon for cedar, and build beautiful villas on the good sites round about the temple; and they found the means to do it. God could endure it no longer. He cried to them by the mouth of the prophet, saying, "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses—and *this* house lie waste?" There was the bare foundation of the temple in some places, and perhaps in others walls that had been run up partially, fourteen years ago, now tumbling into ruins, while their houses shone on the hill-sides, and they had all needed comforts.

Alas! it is so still. It is painful to see, in this day, what a

struggle has to be made if anything is needed for the cause of Jesus and the Church of God. There are men who even complain if money is solicited in the church, who, at home, do not wait for the asking, but provide it in advance. *There probably never would be, in any Christian Church on earth, another solicitation for any object, from this to the judgment day, if every baptized Christian would do his duty in relation to money:* because the treasuries of our churches would always be full and the intellect of the church would be given to the higher question, "How shall we best use this for the work of the Lord?"

It is a shame for any Christian man to live in a house which costs more than the church in which he worships. It is a shame for any Christian man to spend twenty times as much on his family annually as he does on the work of the Lord. Yet, many of us do it, and then, when something great is to be done, we plead poverty and say "the time is not yet!" The stones out of our walls and the timbers out of our ceilings will cry against us. *Our* business is pushed, *our* plans prosper, *our* houses are built, while the work of the Lord is neglected, and the foundation of the Lord's house lie bare.

Lastly, I think that we are led to put off Christian effort by *our disposition to wait until all things are ready.*

No experience seems able to cure men of this propensity. There probably never was an undertaking of any magnitude for which all things were completely ready. Who can take a trip to Europe and not leave something undone that he wished to do? Who can open a store, or launch a boat, or form a company, and not find that something has to be pushed at the last? If there be anything imperative, our duty is to begin it and *make* things ready.

If all the great improvements of the age had been held back until all things were ready, they never would have been brought forward. They have had to fight their way. While the whole civilized world is enjoying the uses of the telegraph, how few think of the immense force that was necessary to make the world receive it. Our late venerable fellow-citizen, Prof. Morse, could have told you how he was ridiculed in the beginning, and how many days of almost despair, with straitened means, he spent in bringing capital and legislation to the aid of invention.

All the great moral reforms have had the same history. Suppose that Wesley and Whitefield had waited until all things were ready in the Anglican Church for a revival of gospel preaching and spiritual power, where had been the immense impetus which Christianity has received in the last century? Suppose Luther had waited for pope and cardinal and bishop and priest to be ready for reformation, where had been that immense bursting of

bonds which made his career glorious? Suppose our adorable Saviour had waited until all the world should be ready to receive Him as its Redeemer, where had been our great redemption?

No, dear brethren: we must not put off what we ought to do, but do it, begin doing it now, do it as fast and as well as possible; and thus, and only thus, can we expect the best results.

How many evils come of procrastination, especially to those who admit that that which they put off must certainly be done.

How it deadens the conscience by binding the senses and blunting the sensibilities! A man's orthodoxy and good resolutions are so much the worse for him, if he do not act on them. He says, "Are not my opinions all sound? And have I not promised that I will *at sometime* do right? What more can be expected?" And he does not see that that postponement is all that is necessary to his ruin. The sick man knows that he is sick, knows he must take a certain medicine, and promises that he will do it: does that cure him? Not at all. All that is necessary to secure his death is to keep him satisfied with the promise that he *will* take the medicine and to keep him postponing the time.

You need not inveigh against Jesus. All you need do for your spiritual ruin is merely to postpone the *time* of your coming. It is easier to do so when one is old than when one is young. It becomes easier all the while, until, at last, your "Not yet" bridges death, and lands us in the desolation beyond the grave.

How it loses opportunities for us. If, when a man first has a conviction that he ought to do a certain thing, he would do it, how his moral strength would increase! Every year a man stays away from Jesus he loses opportunities of laying up treasure in heaven, and of doing a friend's part by his great friend Jesus.

How this spirit of procrastination sets us in opposition to God's plan, which must be the best plan. God's time is "Now!" That ought to end all controversy and direct all action. The Lord says, "Now is the accepted time!" O think, my brethren, how impertinent and insulting is our reply, "The time is not come." Who knows, God or we?

There never will be a time for coming to Jesus better than *this* time—never in the history of one of you. Begin to build now. Just where you are, with just what you have, just as you can, begin, now begin; and how rapidly you will find your resources growing and your power increasing. Think what it is you are to build, a temple for the glorious God to dwell in: and when the sweat is pouring from you, and your back and your brain are aching with work and thought, think what a sublime thing it is to follow this toil, when the Lord shall be pleased to come in His glory and fill the temple you have erected to His honor and for His dwelling.

Do not put it off. Let not selfishness, covetousness, or sloth, make you postpone, for if "the time is not come" it will never, never, never come. Your return to God, your acknowledgement of Jesus, your new life must begin in *some* "now": Oh, for the sake of your peace and growth and everlasting happiness, let it be *this* "now."

Do not say "not yet!" The universe and eternity may catch your words up into a frightful echo, and when all the opportunities shall have been lost, and you shall be pursuing peace and life, crying "when shall I find peace, when shall I find life?" eternity and the universe may send back the doleful reply, "not yet! not yet! not yet!"

Turn from that painful thought! O, turn from that idea of terror and contemplate one of pathos! While His servant has been uttering this discourse, the Divine Master has been standing here in this pulpit taking a profound interest in all that has been said and heard. He knows that His servants intensely desire that you should be saved. His own desire is infinitely greater. He is looking down upon you now with ineffible tenderness. His heart yearns for you; He goes from pew to pew, and puts the mouth of Divine sweetness near the ear of your obdurate heart and in winning tones that seem full of tears, He pleads "not yet? not yet?" That "yet," should bring before you a long and brilliant history of noticed and unnoticed mercies, favors, and providences. It should remind you that through all the years of your life, the Lover of your soul has been wooing you—wooing with Divine tendernesses, and you have resisted Him—you would not yield, "not yet." The "not" indicates your persistency and your hardness, and if you still continue hard and still persist in your refusals, when you pass out by yon door, you will leave the Saviour of mankind standing here looking after you, and in tones which mean more than human words can express, more of life, more of interest, more of concern, crying after you "not yet! not yet!"

Turn to Him now, give joy to your Lord, lay your hand in His and say, "yes, Lord, the time has come, the time when Thou art to be my own and I am to be Thine forever and ever; and may the time never come in this world or in the world to come, in which I shall again be separated from my Lord and Saviour."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WORLD.

SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM S. RAINSFORD, B.A., (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND,) ON SUNDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 24, 1876.

"What is the world?"

What endless discussions and definitions meet us when we seek to answer this simple question, all because man ever looks for some statement which will allow him to retain his own peculiar "world" while it condemns that of his neighbor. Here, as in all other necessary truths, the Word of God is plain enough, when our mind is intent on complying rather with His will than our own inclination. I go at once to the point. That man is living for the world, in whose life the influence of *sin*, *time*, and *sense* is more felt than the influence of holiness, eternity, and spirit. We may condense these and say, the motive power of the worldly man is *self!* Of the Christian, *God!*

If this be worldliness, how is it ingrained in the very being of man! What more natural than that I should be worldly? That, my friends, is precisely the ground our Father takes in dealing with us; it is altogether according to the dictates of nature that we should be most completely worldly; not necessarily in the coarser form which has an attraction for coarser minds, but in the more dangerous, because more specious one, of self-seeking and self-worship. Man is bound to this world by strong cords—worldliness has a treble hold on him. By nature enjoying sin—I do not say sins, consequent—but every natural man enjoys some kind of sin intensely; it may seem to him uncharitable to call it by such a hard name as sin at all, but all effort that has not the glory of God as its ultimate object, is, by Divine definition, sin. Again,

living in time—the short present with its thronging cares, pleasures, and pains; its constant demand on all resources of mind and body, must be more real than the misty future. This is cord No. 2. The last is strongest of the three; he is by nature in a body deeply affected by time, constantly appealed to by sense, its lusts and passions soliciting to sin, its very weariness bearing down the opposition of will and conscience. Surely, a man *is* and *must be* worldly—exactly so; and it is only by grace he can ever become unworldly. Nothing short of moral miracle, imparting a new, unworldly, Divine nature can cause the transformation. Is there a soul here, sick of its own worldliness? Be not discouraged; you never knew before how deeply seated in your very nature lay the roots of this alienation: Again, I say be not cast down. Jesus has not left you by the slow toil of a lifetime to crush out the worldliness of your heart. You cannot give up these dear things till your soul has satisfied its longings with something dearer. He would be this to you, as really as ever stranger stood outside a closed door, stands Christ at thy threshold. He cannot enter as an intruder, He will as a guest. Give Him but one night's lodging, and what a change! Sin is within still, but now strange, unutterable longings after holiness are there too. The claims of time are still pressing, but they are now dealt with in the light of eternity. The flesh is none the less strong, but this last giant is in the presence of a stronger even than he. Friends, the man in whose bosom Christ dwells *cannot!* CANNOT! be a worldling. The man in whom Christ does not dwell, be he moral of life, upright in principle, is a worldly man, and though that worldliness may differ very materially from that of another, he cannot be anything else.

The difficulty in a subject so large as this, is not to lose oneself in generalities. I wish to-night, more particularly to speak of the Christian's position in the world.

First, how is he to regard it? I do not think much good is gained by definitions of what is and is not the world. Some seem never at ease unless, as they say, they are "drawing the line." I don't like these "lines." I think they are opposed to all the principles of the gospel. Our loving Lord Jesus does not depend on rules and regulations, which, like strong walls, are drawn round His fold to keep His foolish sheep from straying, so much as on His own manifested presence in their midst, for where the Shepherd is, there the sheep would feign be. His law is one of "*love*," not "*lines*." I suppose some must have a boundary. Well, if so, I think the advice of an old saint very good: "If you must have your line of demarcation between what is of God and what is of the world, have it; but don't go near it, whatever you do."

I find a passage in Paul's experience which is very much to the point. 1 Cor., vii., 29. He had been beset by questions as to what was right and what wrong, and he seems to speak with a certain amount of diffidence; at least, so I gather from such expressions as "I speak by permission," "To the rest speak I, not the Lord," "I suppose," etc.; but soon shaking himself free from these, he stands on firm ground: v. 29. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away." About various questions there may be a second opinion, but here there can be no mistake. This I say, then: the time is short; the Greek word implies the reefing of a sail; every moment the loose folds are being gathered in. Soon each life must be furled. Oh, Spirit of God, make us to-night to realize this truth! The remorseless walls of time are slowly closing in on us each—on each man, woman, child here. The unconverted, unsaved, worldly soul sees it—refuses to look—forgets! Sees it again, and sinks in its last despair! The Christian sees it—sees through the closing doors of time the vastness of eternity—buckles on his armor—girds his loins—lifts his head, and solemnly thanks his Father and God that "Time is short." But Paul ends this wonderful synopsis of the life of man with another figure of speech. "The fashion of this world passeth away." He borrows the term from the Greek drama, "Life is as a Play." One act quickly succeeds another, and soon all are alike past, for "The fashion of this world passeth *away*."

Notice now their number and order. The curtain of life's stage rises and displays a very lovely picture. *They that have wives.* Here is a bridal, and all things seem to rejoice. Where is there trace of sin or sorrow, death or pain here? The act proceeds. We see happy domestic life, a consecrated spot called home. When the day's toil is over all clouds seem to vanish, and deep, quiet contentment has its undisturbed reign. Bright, merry, loving, healthy children are there: is not now the cup of human happiness filled to the brim? At last, oh, man, thou hast found a secure resting-place—an Eden amid the desert sands. Surely now thou hast found a fixed, a solid, a lasting joy; something worth living for. Yes thank God for such bounteous gifts. But pause! you are at *the end of the act;* see, the curtain is falling, and as it slowly shrouds the quiet scene, on it can be traced the sentence, "The time is short, for the fashion of this world passeth away." Know now the meaning of the words, "Let those that have wives be as though they had none;" and so

the Christian, as he blesses his Father for His best gift of a sweet home, over its threshold would see written, "*The time is short.*"

How different the next act. Can so dark a night succeed so bright a day? *They that weep.* There is a tomb in the cemetary out yonder, and an empty seat round the fire at home, and an empty spot in more hearts than one. Bereavement has not come alone: losses are heavy, anxiety presses, disappointment ushers in disappointment; sickness strikes down the strongest, and the love of friends has been taxed too severely, and not proving equal to the strain, has grown suddenly cold. Now see the whilom happy man, he who had at length found a fixed, a lasting joy; see him now; crushed and lonely, or embittered to his very soul. Let the curtain fall again, and as it sinks the Christain looks up, and with a deep peace can say, "The time is short." Sorrow may endure for a night, but most certain joy cometh in the morning. Tears will flow. Jesus knows that, and would not have it otherwise. Yet while we weep we can be as those who weep not, as we sing, "*The fashion of this world passeth away.*"

Again a wondrous change. *They that rejoice.* Clouds are over and gone; time of singing of the birds has come. Hope revives; business returns to its old channels; new energy awakes within the man; the grass is green on the grave; others to a great extent fill up the empty spot. Losses are retrieved; anxiety is changed to expectation, and friends crowd round once again. Now, cries the worldling, I will do well; I have another fair start. Alas, alas! all God's dealings are in vain; warnings once heeded are now forgotten; amid the clatter of earth's great highway the still small voice is drowned. I speak the truth of God to some here. This is your position to the life. Oh, that you would see that the time is short! Let those that rejoice be as though they rejoiced not, FOR the fashion of this world passeth away.

And now life is almost beyond the impressionable stage. Here is another act. Youth has gone; the fire of life burns more quietly; blood not so hot as it once was. You *cannot scare one worldling now as you would a school-girl;* he knows the worth of things. *Does he?* Listen to him. I will pull down my barns and build greater. Ambition is now my mistress. I must make a name—win a fortune—found a great house. I am universally known and respected—my name is a power in the markets of the world. So it may be. All these things may be true; yet pause, oh, man, to-night; the truth of God confronts thee. The curtain is falling on the scene of thine ambition. For the time is short, and the fourth act is over. There remains but one more. Shall it end in ghastly tragedy? Paul does not think so. He agrees with the psalmist, that in a worldly man's death there

are but seldom any bands. He has used the world well, and, on the whole, he cannot complain of its usage of him. His friends say he has succeeded—that he has *real* goods, *real* fame, *real* respect. *God says* it is all a fashion, and that the last act has come. See! see!! the curtain is creeping down, for the fashion of the world HAS passed away. What remains to him now of all that time had brought, or of the gifts God had given? What now can he take with him, as provision for the long realities of eternity? What covering can he have for his poor naked worldly soul? Nothing, you say. You are wrong. Something he must take—the one thing he had most willingly had left behind him —the sins of his life-time; sins of negligence as well as ignorance; of omission as well as commission. These now are his shroud. Wrap the dead soul in its sin and let it enter the presence-chamber of its forgotten God.

See the child of God; he too plays his part in the closing act; and as it draws to an end it brings no terror to him. He has been mindful of the shortness of the joys and sorrows that in alternate bars of sunshine and shade have fallen across his life's pathway. Gradually he has been drinking into the spirit of Him who was homeless here; not that he has not enjoyed earthly things; he has; but as he sees sin's devastation around him, and feels its mighty power within him, he cries, "I am weary of my inward sickness; I would fain be where they shall die no more, and with the company that shall continually cry, Holy, Holy, Holy."

This is the Christian's position. "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

I want now for a moment or two more, to enter into particulars. "How am I always to settle these vexed questions that trouble so many." There are three simple tests that decide very clearly, I think, if we faithfully apply them.

Let me first ask myself, *Is it lawful? i. e.*, may I do it and not sin? sin not meaning a vicious act, such as the infringement of a law. "Thou shalt not,"—not *anything* that could cause one moment's estrangement between my ever-present Saviour and His child. If that does not decide it, there is another.

Is it becoming a saint? I am a separated one—or saint—a Nazarite set apart for God; *bought,—body, soul and spirit*, who never am or can be my own. May I do it and not wrong my saintly calling? This is a most searching test. But there remains one other. And may our Lord give us all more of His own tenderness here. *Is it expedient?* May I do it and not wrong my brother? Cause him to stumble or make him weak. I confess I

do not think there can arise any case which will not be decided by these three tests from the Word of God. But if it still remains to our mind doubtful, let us give God the benefit of the doubt. If not, it ought to be done with *both hands*, for it must be for His glory.

I have tried to make plain to you the difference between the Christian's value of life and the worldly man's, but the Lord, in this book of truth, tells us to take a yet higher standard with regard to temptations arising from the worldly surroundiugs of a Christian. He says we are to reckon ourselves dead to it, crucified to the world. This seems folly to all but the spiritually taught man. I am afraid many present cannot follow me here. Yet I must declare all the counsel of God, so far as God teach me. "*Crucified to the world.*" What can it mean? Come to the cross of Christ, there alone we can learn.

God tells me that the moment I trust Him, believe His testimony concerning that crucified Man, He looks on me as having hung on that cross; I am forever united to Christ. I died there in His person. I was buried in His tomb. I rose with Him. He regards me as seated now in heavenly places with Him. Christ and I, in fine, are one, now and forever; there is no punishment for me, I have been condemned and executed in the person of my Lord. But how does all this affect my position in the world? In this way: I am now a complex being; there is the old nature within, appealed to ever, as any other man's is, by the temptations of the senses. There is the new nature; its source in Jesus Christ, its supply in Him. Nay, more. Jesus condescends to enter the narrow lodging of a sinner's heart, and dwell there. And Christ in me is my only hope, yet my certain hope of glory. His power, His kingdom within must daily grow and increase. I, my old self, *must*, by the same reasoning, daily decrease. Worldliness in me is the *increase* of the *old self*, in opposition to every warning and appeal; nay, in the very presence of the indwelling Christ, who claims me as His ransomed temple. But how, again I ask, am I to prevent the increase of this worldliness? Now here comes in God's simple, yet mysterious plan: "Reckon yourself to be what I hold you as," saith God, "See yourself as I see you"—it is entirely a matter of faith. "I say you died with Christ, reckon yourself to have so died. When sin appeals to you, answer I am dead to that appeal." Is that all? Nay, dead and alive too. "Ye are dead and your *life* is hid with Christ in God, therefore mortify (*or keep as dead*,) your members that are on the earth."—Col. iii., 3. See the awful list: You are called with a glorious calling, "to walk *in newness of life*."—Rom. vi., 4. For have not "old things passed away and all things become new?"—2 Cor., v., 17. And ere

we touch those old things again, oh, let us gaze on the manner of our release from them. Come to the cross, and read underneath it "crucified with Christ." For time and eternity I and that rejected One are indissolubly united. I am a fellow-worker with Him, now on earth, soon in glory, now in shame, soon in praise. Let me look at this passing world as He did. Ruthless hands have been laid on the Prince of Life. Hurried out of the city, they have taken Him here to die; it's all nearly over now. They have crucified the Lord of Glory. The thorn has gashed His brow, and from the open wound the blood is trickling down. The cursing and blasphemy of the crowd come but indistinctly to His dying ear, and Jesus gazes on the lost city, and the world He died to save, through the mist of His own blood. *Crucified to the world!* Oh Lord, teach us when these poor hearts of ours are rent and torn by fierce temptation, to remember "We are crucified with Christ, nevertheless we live, yet not we, but Christ liveth in us, and the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us." Here is an antidote to worldliness. He loved me and gave Himself for me. Now I love Him and have given myself to Him.

Lastly, a word to the worldly here. Your world is not so much around you, as within you. Well, you say: "How can I help it? Here am I, a man of business, tossed in the very vortex of the whirlpool of life. I know I may be sucked down, forgotten, gone to-morrow. I can't help that. I must attend to business. Your standard is ridiculously high." High or low, my brother, it is God's standard. Ah, man, God does not want *thee to give up thy worldliness.* What! you say, "That is what you have been driving at all night." No, no; not that you should give up worldliness but that you should receive Christ. That you should close with His present offer and take Him as your all. Why not? and conscience cries why not? "I would, indeed, BUT"—*ah! I have got it, that* BUT *is your world*, a real, mighty, impassable barrier to your soul's salvation. My time is gone. I must close. But I close with the lines of one who was worldly; nature and education had richly endowed him, but he found no rest for the sole of his way-worn feet till with Him who carrieth the lambs in His arms.

I was wandering and weary,
  When my Saviour came unto me;
For the ways of sin grew dreary,
  And the world had ceased to woo me;
And I thought I heard Him say,
  As He came along His way,
O silly souls! come near me,
My sheep need never fear me,
  I am the Shepherd true.

At first I would not harken,
And put off till the morrow;
But life began to darken,
And I was sick with sorrow.
And I thought I heard Him say,
As He came along His way,
Oh sinful souls! come near me,
My sheep need never fear me;
I am the Shepherd true.

He took me on His shoulder,
And tenderly He kissed me,
He bade my love grow bolder,
And He said how He had missed me.
And I'm sure I heard Him say,
As He went along His way,
Oh sinful souls! come near me,
My sheep need never fear me,
I am the Shepherd true.

I thought His love would weaken,
As more and more He knew me,
But it burneth like a beacon,
And its light and heat go through me.
And I ever hear Him say,
As He goes along His way,
Oh sinful souls! come near me,
My sheep need never fear Me,
I am the Shepherd true.

CHAPTER XXV.

LOVE TO JESUS.

FAREWELL SERMON BY THE REV. WILLIAM S. RAINSFORD, B.A., ON SUNDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 8, 1876.

"The fruit of the spirit is love."—*Galatians v.* 22.

As I have a great deal to say to-night, I will go to the point directly. What is the meaning of those few words? What does the Holy Ghost intend us plainly to gather from them?

What is fruit? We all know that fruit is the product of live. You cannot have fruit without life. What am I taught here? That the Spirit of God begets the fruit of love; that when the Holy Spirit enters and takes up His eternal abode in the heart of a man, that presence is marvellously soon manifested, and I find in the Word of Truth, that the first manifestation of His presence in the sinner's heart is this—love! "The fruit of the spirit is love."

We have considered on other Sunday evenings together, dear friends, this all-important subject of God's entrance into the sinner's heart, and to-night, I desire, by my Father's help, to deal with this verse in one of the most important ways in which I believe God intended us to use it. I desire to apply it as a test to my own profession, and I pray that it may be applied, by God the Holy Ghost, as a test to yours. Here is a statement made by God. He says: Given that the Holy Ghost has taken up His abode in the sinner's heart, that in-dwelling presence is speedily manifested to the world by love. Does He find this fruit in our lives to-night? This question stares us plainly in the face, for as truly as the Spirit of God takes up His abode in my heart, love is the consequent of His abiding. Have I got that love? If I

have the Spirit of God, I certainly have. If I have not the Spirit of God, I as certainly have not. What is this love? I feel myself standing here, to-night, like a man standing on the brink of a great depth. I cannot pretend with any human plummet to sound it. My poor eye cannot essay for a moment to gaze across its abyss.

What is this love? Whence comes it? What creates it? First of all it is a *love of attraction*. When Jesus Christ takes up His abode in a sinner's heart, that soul is drawn out to God in a manner unintelligible to the world, and almost unintelligible to the heart itself. I cannot tell how it comes that one day men are callous to God's appeal and careless of God's love, and the next all the longings and emotions of the heart are drawn out towards Himself. I cannot tell how it is, but I know that this love is a love of attraction. It is a love that, in spite of a man, draws him out of himself towards God. So I must look away from the love itself, to its object, to find an answer.

See a little plant, as the spring comes on, and the sun shines brightly on it, a marvelous change taking place in its tiny existence. The plant sends up its little tendrils towards the sun; and, drawn away from earth by that mysterious power outside itself, it resists and overcomes the mighty law which would drag it down, and unconsciously it is drawn upward.

Just so is it with the sinner's soul. When I see the Father's glory first of all shining through the rays of Christ Jesus, my soul is drawn upward by that light. Just as the sun makes himself felt in his life-giving and life-sustaining ray, so God makes Himself felt by His manifestation of Himself through Jesus. The rays of the sun tell us of the sun, and God speaks to us of Himself through Jesus Christ. He is, as it were, the ray which God sends from His own fulness to gladden our poor hearts, and draw them out to Him. I cannot explain why the plant is drawn up, but I know it is drawn; and the sun's ray does it; neither can I, how the sinful heart is drawn; all I know is, it is drawn, and Jesus does it.

It is a love of attraction that possesses and moulds the man in whom the Spirit dwells. I know nothing of the magnet. What mysteries hang about that small, that seemingly insignificant toy! There is a particular spot of light shining in the heavens to-night, and towards that star, millions of miles away, that tiny needle ever points. You cannot make it untrue to the object of its attraction. Thousands of years have passed, but the needle is pointing still. On sea and land, amid storm and calm, safety and danger, 'tis all the same to it. For untold ages that star, across the mighty gap of space, has held it true to itself, nor has the lapse of time impaired its power. Just so the heart points

to Jesus. Where the spirit of God has entered that attraction has begun, and not all the diverting powers of earth or hell, or flesh or devil can divert that soul that has found its attraction in Jesus. Oh, yes; it is a love of attraction is this love. When this poor body is laid aside, and when we break loose from these shackles that now so closely bind us down; when earth's cords are all snapped, then, as fast as the immortal spirit can wing its flight, we will away to Christ. That is the difference between the Christian and the unconverted man. He wants to be with Christ. That is his heaven. Ask what is heaven! I do not know what heaven is. I cannot tell. One thing I do know, it is to be with Christ; and in all God's great expanse of universe there does not exist one single thing that could take His place. Aye, it is a love which draws all the fibres of the soul right out to the person of Jesus, round Him they twine, towards Him they reach with an attraction that ever-deepens, that ever-strengthens, that ever-broadens in its extent, until at last, we gaze, no longer through the glass darkly, but see Him, face to face.

Then again, it is a *personal love.* Let me say a word about this. It is not only a love for Christ's doctrine. It is not only a love for God's truth, but it is a personal love. A very eminent saint has beautifully said, "Jesus Christ's doctrines are, as it were, His garments, white and lustrous; they smell of myrrh, and aloes and cassia; Jesus Christ's precepts are His sceptre, and needy sinners may draw near and touch its gracious tip; Jesus Christ's ordinances are His glorious throne overlaid with pure gold." But sweeter than His garments, more mighty than His sceptre, more glorious than His glorious gospel, is Himself. Yea, He is altogether lovely; and love for Him is the very heart and core of all true religion. It is a personal love,—love to the one Being in whom is centred all the longings of the heart. It is a personal love, dear friends, and now, when God comes to you to-night, and puts the question, "Lovest thou Me?" When God stops to-night, to make a statement, "That love to Me can only be the fruit of My Spirit," I want you to notice the quality of that love. It is a love which is begotten of the attraction which Jesus Christ has over the soul that has gazed on His beauty, and it is a love which centres itself on Jesus Christ Himself.

But I must pass on. I find the word of God distinctly stating that this fruit is a necessary fruit. It is absolutely necessary. As I read in the chapter to-night, having all things, if we possess it not, we fall infinitely short of God's demands. I remark first, it is necessary for a church. You may have a great and gorgeous edifice, a man of mighty intellect, of great diversity of powers and divers gifts as your pastor; you may have your seats filled with all the wealth and fashion and intellect of a great city;

you may have a great reputation, and a name which resounds all over the land; you may have great organizations and great ramifications for work and usefulness, but if you have not got love, your church is like a lamp without oil, like a harness without a horse. I find Jesus Christ speaking solemnly on this question. When standing on the Isle of Patmos, He bade John to go speak to the church of Ephesus and tell them that they have forgotten their first love: "Tell them that labor and patience—labor that has toiled, patience that has not faltered—have not saved them from a fall, cannot save them from extinction itself: nor prevent the candle-stick from being removed out of its place."

Where is the church of Ephesus now? Paul her founder, John himself her pastor. She is gone. Her candle-stick removed forever, her light quenched and darkness now reigns where light once shone. Churches want this love to run through them like veins of fire to light up cold hearts, to melt icy hearts, to cheer faint hearts and guide wandering hearts. But I must come right down to individuals, for after all, that is the important part of my subject to night. I must have this individual love for Christ. Why is this "must" attached to it by God? Let me point out to you how this love comes. This explains God's MUST. Is it the fruit of knowledge? If this love were the fruit of knowledge, God would not make its possession a *sine qua non*, because every man has not got knowledge. Is this love the fruit of gifts? Not so, because if it were, God would not demand it of every man, because every man has not received gifts. Some of us have very little knowledge and still less gifts, but mark you, *the fruit of the spirit* is love. It is the operation of God's own Spirit, and therefore He demands it in every single case. Hast thou love? Not, hast thou knowledge? not, hast thou gifts? but, hast thou love? I tell you, my friends, this love has existed in the darkest corners of the earth. There have been men shrouded in ignorance and covered up with bigotry, and yet they have possessed this love. There have been men who knew very little about the doctrines of the Christian religion and yet have possessed this love. Show me a man who hates sin for sin's sake, who longs to be like Christ for Christ's sake, who longs for Christ's kingdom to come, and though he may not have knowledge, though he may not have gifts, yet he has something far better than either. I don't care how dark he otherwise may be, I don't care how faultful his definition of doctrine may be, if he possesses this love it is a proof that the Spirit of God dwelleth in him. It is the fruit of God's own Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is love. For He has entered that lowly lodging place there to abide for ever. I will tell you one place where He does not exist, one spot where never yet has burned the holy flame. It never yet was found in

the cold, calculating, self-satisfied heart of the worldly man, and it never will be.

I must press the question yet more closely home, if you will bear with me for a moment. I desire to-night that speaker and congregation may all sink before God to one common level, and let us turn aside and pause while we give an answer to the question that He puts to us. Jesus Christ Himself pauses in the midst of this crowded assembly to-night, and He asks me, He asks you, my brethren, who have worked here this summer, He asks professing Christians here, He asks one and all, "Lovest thou Me?" I hear somebody say, "Of course I do; of course I love Jesus Christ." Mark you this: The first thing the Spirit of God does when He enters a man's heart is to teach him that there is no "of course" about it; that this personal love to Jesus is altogether opposed to the course that his heart has hitherto run. Whenever I hear a man say "of course," I begin to think he is a long way from God yet. He has got to be taught that the course that this world runs is opposed to the will of God; that the flow of life's current has to be turned right around; and then it will be "of course," because it is the Spirit's work, and not his. There is no "of course" about it. Oh, but you say, "I am a professor; I love Jesus; I have professed religion for many years." Now I want you to notice this: these words are addressed to professors. These men and these women were professors of the highest stamp. Which of us could place ourselves alongside of them to-night? They spoke with tongues. There is profession for you. They spoke by prophecy. They had wrought many marvellous works. They had cast out devils. They had performed great cures. Though they were men of miracles and gifts—though they had been brought up under the training of the apostles—though the Spirit of God had in cloven tongues of fire flamed in the midst of their assemblies, yet none of these gifts in the past and none of these gifts in the present hindered the question being solemnly put to each, "Lovest thou Me?"

My opinion of myself to-night—your opinion of yourself, may prevent our putting to our own souls this awful and solemn question. Your gift to-night—your life—my gifts and my life, may prevent others putting the question to us; but no single fact in our experience, past or present, nor any single event which can possibly happen to you or me in this short day of time or in the great eternity, can prevent Jesus Christ putting this question right home to each one of our souls. You may shirk it to-night, but the day will come when the walls of God's providence, having fast closed around you, you will stand face to face before the great white throne, and that question shall be thy deciding point for all eternity, "Lovest thou Me?" Oh, may God make you

answer that question honestly to-night. He does not ask, "Lovest thou thy prayers?" He does not ask me if I love my Bible; He does not ask me if I love my church; He does not ask me if I love my creed; He does not ask me if I love the Holy Communion; He does not ask me if I love my minister. Men have loved their church, their creed. their minister, their prayers; yet one thing they have lacked, and they have passed into the great beyond without God, or peace, or rest, or hope—bankrupt forever. They could not answer the question, "Lovest thou Me?" I see before me to-night men standing on the brink of eternity; I see before me those who are deceiving themselves; I see as I speak a great cloud of opposition rising up from the hearts of men, while the Spirit of God puts the question to each one of you, "Lovest thou Me?" You won't be cornered in that way. "But," says some one, "I am a communicant." I am glad to hear it; but Judas was a communicant. The Bible places before you some relics of wrecks on this awful shoal of self-deception. God has allowed them to float down the stream of time, and has bouyed them with the word "wreck," to be a warning to every mariner for all time. But you say, "I am a worker." My friend, God bids thee to-night to leave thy work. "I am a district visitor." Come away from your district. "I am a tract distributer." Come away from your tenement house; come aside. "I am a tent worker." Man, stand before God to-night. Let go your work. Come aside for one moment from all the things in which you are eugaged—away from the whirr and whirl of Christian machinery. Jesus Christ wants to ask you a question; come, ye yourselves, apart; let each man kneel in the presence of His Lord. Jesus Christ demands an answer. "After all thy Bible classes taught; after all thy work done; after all thy tracts distributed; after all thy activity, I want to know, honestly and truly, "*Lovest thou Me?*" and as I stand among you to-night, for the last time, I know well that the covert opposition of some hearts is resisting that question of the great God. Oh, man, do not resist God! He would break down thy opposition. Yield to His voice to night when He asks thee the question, "Lovest thou Me?" Thou art brought face to face with His truth to-night. God is now whispering to thy conscience. Listen to Him. Shirk not the truth. Seek not to wash thy soul in the waters of forgetfulness. God speaks to thee now. Give him an honest answer, I beseech you. There is one portion of God's word that I ask you to read with me. It is the beginning of the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. Paul says, in dealing with this question, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Then there is a day coming when speech shall no

longer form a cloud behind which I can retreat. There is a day coming when to say, "I believe, I love, I know," will not be enough. There are men now so like the real thing that no man can pierce through their well-arranged disguises. I cannot see through them; their friends cannot see through them; their minister cannot see through them; the world cannot see through them; but, mark you! there is a day coming when the finger of death shall sound that man, and death will say, "Hollow as sounding brass." The finger of the Judge will sound that soul and He will say, "Hollow as sounding brass," and that is all; and Jesus Christ will say, "Hollow; here is an empty house; I wanted to enter; I longed to enter; I knocked that I might enter; the house is swept; the house is garnished; it is empty." "I am become," says the distracted soul, "after all my opportunities passed, after all my professions, but sounding brass: only empty after all; nothing but sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Then look at the next verse: "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge." Here is a man that has all knowlodge; he has all gifts; he knows this book from cover to cover; he can entrance audiences and sway men backwards and forwards as reeds rocked by the wind; but now he stands before God with all knowledge, and understanding all mysteries, but it is not enough. There is no love there. And the apostle says further of others: "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains." "What," says the soul, "can I have faith and be lost?" You can. You may have all faith, so great that the mountains will bend at your bidding, and topple into the deep sea, and yet not have love. Faith that is begotten of the Spirit of God works by love; and if there is no love, faith is but an empty husk. That is God's word, and I dare not alter a syllable. "All faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing." Oh, soul, trusting to thy faith or thy conversion instead of thine own Lord, let this test thee. Then the apostle says further: "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor." Here is self-denial for you. He does not give a stray dollar now and then, and not miss it, but he gives all his goods to feed the poor. His pockets are turned inside out. He listens to every cry of distress, and relieves; yet, though he does all these things and have not love,—What does the book say?—"It profiteth him nothing."

Then we may have zeal. My friends, follow me closely here. Zeal! Though my zeal be of so fiery a sort that I give my body to be burned. I confess to my God that I want heart-searching here. I confess that there is a great deal of self in our zeal. I speak for myself, my friends, as well as for you. There is a great deal of wanting to be first. There is a great deal of wanting to

cut a big figure before the world. I suppose there is as great a temptation on the part of the Christian to be a great Christian, as there is on the part of the worldling to be a great worldling. God deliver you and me from them both. Though we have all zeal, —though it carry us to the stake, yet, when I stand before God, it will not pass me into His presence if I have not love. These are not my words. They are the words that are written in this Book. Jesus is coming to seek fruit, and the fruit of the Spirit is love. He comes to you and to me, to-night, and He says, "I have come to thee seeking fruit; you promised Me fruit, and you have failed to give it Me; I cannot wait any longer." Oh, sinners, what fruit have you for Jesus to-night? Young man, young woman, what fruit have you for Jesus to-night? You have been listening to the Word of God; what fruit have you for Jesus? Think not that I speak simply under excitement, I speak under the realities of a great eternity to come. Not all your gifts, your culture, your knowledge, your zeal, are worth one poor straw with Jesus Christ, if you have no fruit of love. What answer will you give Him to-night? Speak, soul. You say, "I have got fruit for Thee, Lord. I have got prayer. Lord, thou knowest I have prayed night after night." "Oh, soul, you must step back; I didn't ask for your prayers; I didn't ask these of thee. I want to know hast thou got love. I don't ask thee for thy knowledge, I ask thee for thy love. I know thee not." "But, Lord, I have the fruit of faith." "Stand back. I ask thee not of thy faith to-night. I ask of thy love. I know thee not." "I have self-denial." Is that true? We say it often; but I ask myself to-night, and I ask you, is that true? What have you denied yourself for Jesus? I ask my brother-workers here, what have you denied yourself for Jesus? "But I question not of self-denial now. Love is the fruit of the Spirit; thou hast none of this love. I came to seek love. Soul, I bid thee depart; for I know thee not." Oh, my friends, what fruit, I ask again, does Jesus Christ find in you to-night? If you have never listened to the Word before, oh, let me beseech you to listen to it now. I don't want you to think that that love is the result of a long-sustained effort of the soul. I don't want you to go away imagining that you have got to begin trying to love Jesus. It is not so. It is love which springs spontaneously from the breast that knows that throughout all the cycles of eternity the loving God has been engaged in providing salvation for him. I tell you it is just drawn out by the shining of God's love in the face of Jesus Christ. To each of us He puts the question to-night, "Lovest thou Me? I have found other fruit, but I have not found this!" I fear me that of some of you now, God is taking leave. I fear me that some people here are now for the last time feeling the prick of

conscience. They are choking the voice of God. Now saith the Spirit, "I leave thee. I leave thee to thy rest. Thou shalt have peace now." Oh, the peace of a seared conscience, the peace of a heart twice dead,—the peace of the *lost soul!* Surely, there are some that can say, "Stop, Lord; Lord, thou knowest all things. I stand under Thine eye. My love is not what I fain would have it; it is cold and fickle; it is passing and changeful; but Lord, Thou knowest all things, and Thou knowest I love Thee." Blessed be God, I know some who can say that, to-night. May God increase the numbers. My friends, I think of the time, as I now take my leave of this platform, when all things within us and without us that oppose this love of Christ shall be swept away, even as impetuous Kishen swept down the host of Sisera, and I pray, my God, to hasten the time. I think of the prayer the inspired prophetess uttered as she gazed on that wreck, and from my soul I pray it to-night. "So let all thine enemies perish, oh, God; but let those that love thee be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." May God answer that prayer for each one of you for Jesus Christ's sake, that you may see the sun growing brighter and brighter, and the veil that hides you from your God growing thinner and thinner, and no changeful shadows passing over your life, until at last you are just engulfed in the love, that through all the years here has drawn you up and up to itself. May God grant it, for Christ's sake.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GREAT GLADNESS AND JOY.

THE CLOSING HOURS OF THE TENT SERVICES—SERMON BY THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D., ON SUNDAY, OCT. 15, 1876.

"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, *because your names are written in heaven.*"

These words were spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ to the seventy disciples whom He sent out to work miracles and to preach. We read that they returned to Him with joy, saying: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name," and the blessed Saviour gave that Divine answer which appeals to-day with such force to the heart of every true believer. The days of miracle-working are over, but, thanks be to God, not of joy. Christianity would indeed be but a sorrowful profession were it robbed of its hours of rejoicing and gladsomeness. But it never will or can be so shorn. Every child of God has a joy and gladness, peculiarly fitted to the individual need of his or her soul, but throughout the wide world, all Christians have common ground for a "peace that passeth understanding," and the words of Jesus give expression to it: "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

Yet, the Christian religion is by no means a selfish one. It has its special seasons of great gladness and joy, and always when a good work for the Lord has been accomplished, and His name honored and glorified. On Sunday, October 15th, 1876, such a season had come round in the history of the New York Gospel Tent, and the gladness *was* great and the joy self-evident. Do you inquire whether there was cause for it? Go and ask any one or all of the six hundred persons who date their conversion to God, from some period between the 11th of June and the 15th of October, the opening and closing days of the tent services; or go and ask the clergymen whom the Lord privileged to proclaim His Word with saving power, under the shelter of the canvas tabernacle, or the Christian workers who faithfully labored during the hot summer months with the anxious souls who flocked into the inquiry room, and to whom they had the joy of unfolding the unspeakable riches of the gospel. Yes, there was indeed cause for both gladness and joy, and whilst those who had taken part in the work, and those who had become reconciled to a loving Father through it, met together to give expression to their feelings, the honor and glory was accorded to Him to whom it alone of right belonged.

For eighteen complete weeks had the revival under canvas been carried on, and Sunday, the 15th of October, was appointed for the closing service. The day proved one of intense cold, quite unexpected in its severity, and it was deemed advisable to transfer the meeting to the Church of the Holy Trinity, which was crowded to suffocation. The programme gave three hours continual service, and the first hour was devoted to the singing of several hymns of praise, and a sermon by the Rev. C. C. Tiffany, of the Church of the Atonement, who chose for his text Matthew xi., 29. "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He said the common object of all denominations was, or ought to be, to bring the people to Christ, and the glory of the gospel consisted in the fact that it takes hold of people just as they are. True liberty was only to be found in Jesus, and He invited His ransomed creatures to learn of Him and find rest to their souls. If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. Modesty without and virtue within were the true attributes of the child of God.

The second hour's service was devoted to prayer, and a sermon by the Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D., appropriate to the occasion, which was as follows, and to which we call the reader's special attention:—

FINAL SERMON IN CONNECTION WITH THE GOSPEL TENT REVIVAL, BY THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D.

"There was very great gladness."—*Nehemiah viii.*, 17.

The context gives us the first instance of street preaching contained in the Word of God. The children of Israel had returned from their long captivity in Babylon and in part completed the reconstruction of the city of Jerusalem. Ezra was their priest and preacher. In this chapter of Nehemiah we have a sketch of his efforts among the people, and of the incidents connected with his peculiar ministry, all of which, I think, we shall find to be a close parallel of the history of our "Gospel Tent," and the work in which, during the past summer, we have been engaged. The conclusion of Ezra's street preaching and of our work under canvas, is the same. This text is its expression: "There was very great gladness." If you will look at the connected passage, you will find that a pulpit of wood was constructed in the street of Jerusalem, on which Ezra stood. On his right hand and on his left were gathered his helpers in the work, the Levites to lead the songs, and those who aided him in the extension and the application of the Word. Besides these, in the seventh verse of this chapter, it is recorded where "Jeshua, Bani and Sherebiah" and a number of others who caused the people to understand the law, and in private more fully developed the teaching which Ezra gave in public. The character of the preaching is equally determined. He read from the book of the law and made the people understand the reading because he gave the sense of the several passages. All this teaching in the street resulted in the renewal of an old custom, which had fallen into disuse, among Israel; for "since the day of Joshua, the son of Nun," the people had not celebrated the feast of the tabernacles. When Ezra expounded the law he came suddenly upon the passage enjoining the observance of this festival, and so it is written, "The people went forth and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephriam. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths and sat under the booths." Thus the feast of the tabernacles, which was to many of the unbelieving Jews a novelty, was restored in its primitive usage. All through this feast, day by day, from the first day until the last, Ezra read in the book of the law of God, and the result of the reading, the teaching and the communion was that "there was very great gladness." This merriment, this holy joy, culminated on the eighth day in "a solemn

assembly according unto the manner" of the early people of God.

My dear friends, thus, for eighteen weeks, have we observed the Feast of the Tabernacle. In each feature of this history I find a suggestion of our own work; and, indeed, if we had no other warrant for the peculiar office in which we have been engaged, Ezra's example would be enough. For we have made the people understand the sense of the Book of God. We have been surrounded by Levites to lead the songs. We have been supported by those who have been most eager in the private application of the truth. We have held our long feast under the canvas, and now we come to the solemn assembly at its close. As of old time, so is it now, "there is very great gladness."

Let us consider, without further introduction, the suggestions of this text which are pertinent to our present circumstances, and seek:

I. First of all, to JUSTIFY THIS GLADNESS. Has it a warrant? Have we reasons to be glad? or ought we to be despondent and doubtful and self-reproachful? Christian joy is always its own justification. It needs no apologies; for, in both its inspiration and its influence, it bespeaks its Divine origin and its adaptation to the good of men, as well as the glory of God. I think it is Dr. Bushnell who, in one of his sermons, makes the distinction between happiness and joy, which has since prevailed through very much religious writing. Happiness comes from the things that happen. It is an external addition to our condition. It depends upon the happening—upon the hap—the lot. The very word which in the Latin expresses joy, equally defines it. Exultation is something that leaps forth. It must be within before it can be without. It is not to be taken by contagion; it must be implanted by Divine power. When, therefore, a Christian is truly joyous we are taught by God's word that He has the fruit of the Spirit. He has learned to enter into the thoughts of God, and whilst on earth, to have some of the experience which shall be his in its perfectness when he enters into rest. If then, we say that these believing people of God have very great gladness, we only testify about them that which is their natural tendency if they know the Lord, their common emotion if they have tasted that the Lord is gracious and precious. But how know we that this gladness is of the right sort? How can we justify it before the Word of God?

The glad tidings of the Word are the source of this gladness. These have been the spring of all our enthusiasm, for I bear you witness that the Word of God in the gospel of grace, has been freely, fully and faithfully preached all through these weeks to the thousands and tens of thousands of different persons who have worshiped beneath the tent. We lifted our banner with the

inscription of "The Gospel Tent," and to-day, while we lower the banner we read with new pride and delight the title we gave it at the first. It is "The Gospel Tent," the tent of the Glad Tidings, for that is the meaning of gospel. Beneath the folds of that flag we have preached salvation through the blood of the crucified One. We have told the many who have come to hear us that they are saved on the moment of their trust in the cross of Christ. Saved! yes, freely, fully, finally saved.

The substance of the gospel, which has thus resulted in gladness, is salvation *in Christ*, His obedience meeting our defects, His death expiating our crimes, His intercession opening heaven to our hope, and providing a fulness of support in times of weakness, of merit in days of shortcoming, and sympathy in hours of affliction. So that he who accounts himself as God counts him, "in Christ," has passed from death and entered into immortality, and sits in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, while he walks in obedience with Christ on earth. Saved? Yes; saved *by Christ*. Dear friends, what was it that restrained you in the moment of your first confession of Christ, from returning to the old sin? Whas has it been all through these years of constant conflict with the evil within you, with temptations which have seduced you? What is it that has inspired you to effort? What has given that motive and strength to resist the spiritual foes that have assailed you? Only Christ; who is able to make us stand, who is able to keep us from falling, who is able to build us up. It is not enough to be saved in Christ, the believer is saved by Christ. It is equally true that we are saved *for Christ*. The end of our salvation is not our own enjoyment; nor yet is it the influence that we shall exert over the world. The glory of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, is the final cause of our security. We are placed here as witnesses to the glory of God our Saviour, to make men know that there is One who, all-powerful, is able to pluck us as brands from the burning, and employ us as torches in the darkness of the world. And so we look up to that loving face of Jesus, and say, "Not only saved in Christ, and by Christ, but saved for Christ." Nor yet have we finished the recital, for we are saved *unto Christ*. Each believer is looking forward to that day when the promise shall be fulfilled: "I go to prepare a place for you; I will come again and receive you unto Myself." Whether the Lord shall come to us in death as an angel clothed with a cloud, having a rainbow about His head, or whether we shall be one of that generation who shall receive the fulfilment of "that blessed hope" as we are caught up into the clouds with His risen saints, we do not know. Whatever be the mode of His appearance to accomplish His purpose, of this we are assured, for He has said it, we shall be saved unto the

coming of Christ. So the past is provided for in the completed work of Christ; so the present is covered by the maintenance of His high priestly office on high, and the agencies of His Word and His Spirit, as well as His work among men. And so the future is cared for by the forethought and unsearchable stores of grace that He ministers to needy sinners. These are the glad tidings. We have preached them, we have received them, and have rejoiced in them. Well might the angels tell the story; for, wherever the gospel has gone, joy has followed in the testimonies of all who have received and recognized its beauty and its power. These are the sources of this very great gladness. If I should go around among those who have been converted and ask, "Why do you rejoice?" I am confident the response in unison would be "We rejoice in the reconciliation; we joy in the Lord, our complete Saviour."

But again, in the justification of this joy, we have *the testimony of believers.* This is the reflection of the glad tidings as they are received and become a power in human living. Do you recall that perfect parable of the prodigal son. It was our lesson in this morning's service. Did you note when we read it, that after the prodigal was restored to his home, it is said "they began to be merry?" In the reception of the one that was lost, in the restoration of the one that was dead, they found a cause of gladness. The father rejoiced, and wondered that the surly elder brother could not appreciate the secret of all the mirth that was within the home. And so, as each new soul comes within the embrace of these glad tidings, and catches some of the glory-light that comes from the face of the reconciling Saviour, we have found a new explanation of our great gladness in the testimony we have received to the gospel. This has been our daily experience. Blessed be God, there has not been one evening without a birth into the family of God. All the brethren who have been engaged, working and watching for souls, have been made most eager in their gladness by those who have been given to them through the grace of the Spirit, as the seals of their ministry. One such soul submitting to Jesus, entering into the fulness of His favor, learning of Him and trusting in His promises, is enough in its testimony of thankfulness to cause great gladness throughout the body of those who believe in the Lord. We have an apostolic warrant for this joy in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, the second chapter, and the nineteenth and twentieth verses. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy." And as I look down into the faces of the dear friends, to-night, who have been brought into a knowledge of Jesus Christ through the ministry of this Gospel Tent, my own

gladness mingles with theirs', and is returned to me with a new experience of the preciousness of our common portion. A fountain is opened in every new believer's soul, not only for his own refreshment, but at which those who have been permitted to teach him the truth are themselves refreshed in turn. And what a number has the Lord God given us as spiritual children in this ministry of grace. Those who have kept a list of the persons who have professed themselves to be enquirers, and who have been supposed to come into a knowledge of the truth, tell me that more than six hundred have enrolled themselves as the new children and followers of the Father and the Saviour since we began this work. If each one of you new converts be a true believer, casting aside all the things that contest the supremacy of Christ, your all-sufficient Saviour, then have we six hundred strings to sweep as of an instrument on which we seek to manifest the very great gladness in which all the people of God find new comfort and encouragement in their work. But, dear young Christians, let me say this word to you, since I have found in your testimony a justification of the joy of these workers, "Stand ye fast in the Lord." This was the very emphasis of the apostle, and the explanation of his highest joy when he wrote in the third chapter of first Thessalonians, at the eighth verse, "For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." The whole credit of this work, as of God, will depend upon the steadfastness, the devotion, the consecration, the zeal of those, who, through the teaching beneath the canvas, have come into the knowledge of the truth. There are carpers and cavillers and critics all about, who are watching for the lame and the weak; but be ye steadfast in searching the truth, that ye may grow in the knowledge of the glad tidings. Be ye steadfast in following the leading of your Lord. Submit to His will as you feed upon His Word. The whole reputation among men of this work of our summer, now ending, must rest upon the calmness, the steadiness, the steadfastness of those who through it have been converted to God.

David, in his psalms, says every now and then, "Selah," "Selah." The heart of a believer is like a harp which is unstrung. Only the hand of the Son of David can sweep its wires and bring out the fullest melody of joy. And so the Spirit of God constantly suggests to us still higher causes of thankfulness. As the psalmist himself says, so say I to you, "Selah." Take the highest note not simply of your reception of the glad tidings; not added to this the testimony of those who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, but in *the joy of angels, in the satisfaction of Jesus the Master, in the gladness of the Father's house*, find the chief justification of our great gladness. We know, for God has said it, that there has been joy before the

Father because of the work that we have thus carried on, and the souls of those who have been won to the Father in Jesus have known some of the holy mirth which rules in heaven.

II. Let me, as a second thought, give you an invitation to JOIN IN THE SONG. Let the Levites be our leaders, for a host of them the Lord has sent us to aid in this branch of our work. That gladness which ceases before song begins is most partial and superficial in its experience. George Herbert says that "prayer is the end of preaching;" and if that be so, then praising is the end of praying; for, by-and-bye, both preaching and praying shall cease, but

> Our days of praise will ne'er be past
> While life, and soul, and being last.

Oh, the joy that we have in this anticipation—the joy that is to be ours everlastingly! That soul which has begun to praise has entered upon its eternal employment. When, therefore, I ask you to join in the song which is suggested by this gladness, I provide for you a method by which you shall forget your differences. Not long since, in a very close and exclusive church, the hymn was announced:

> I love thy kingdom, Lord,
> The church of Thine abode;

The second verse, as you remember, is:

> I love thy church, oh God,
> Her walls before Thee stand,
> Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
> And graven on Thine hand.

All those dear people who worshipped through ceremony and symbol, with the utmost earnestness, united in the song. They forgot that an old-fashioned Puritan wrote it, so admirably did it fit into their High Church convictions. Thus have the songs of Charles Wesley found their way around the world, among Christians of every name, and Isaac Watts has been the Asaph of the church for generations. When you can persuade two Christians of different convictions to sing together, you have provided a certain way for annihilating their perplexities and contradictions and smoothing down their asperities. It is for this reason that we encourage the song, that our hearts may flow together in the new experience of our common privileges.

But the gladness of the feast of the tabernacle is *an individual experience.* I can look all through this congregation tonight and point to individuals in the gallery and beneath on the floor who have received that joy of the Lord mysteriously; they know not how; they hardly know when. It is the one thing that we have which is singular. We are united together by all sorts of associations. We all have common experiences; but, my dear

friends, your joy is unlike mine, and mine is different from that of any other believer the world around. This is the peculiarity of our Christian experience. Each one knoweth his own joy—has a different emotion from that of his fellow. A stranger intermeddleth not therewith. Who that have not experienced this gladness can know anything about it? Who can describe it? Who, of all this multitude of individuals that have received it, can define it? How many hearts have been lightened; how many homes have been brightened; how many lives have been inspired through the very great gladness that God has given in the tent! I have seen in your faces tears of repentance, and God's light of acceptance has painted the promises in their falling showers. I have recognized the smile of submission with which the one who has surrendered to the Lord has grasped at the truth and entered into this experience at once. I have known it and rejoiced in it, as it has been manifested in the zeal of consecration which has consumed some of our new converts throughout these weeks. Then it has been given me to behold this same blessed joy written on the silent features of those that have been sweetly called away by the Master's love to be with Him in His home. For let us not forget the souls of those that have worshipped with us in the tent, who now see Jesus face to face. The Master has called them from this lower sphere of privilege into the joys of His immediate presence. In all these varied ways have we recognized the singular and individual joy of each believer brought into the knowledge of the truth.

But *what a chorus we have had in this gladness.* Not only your joy and my joy, but united with us have been the voices of thousands in the tribute of praise. Here have been assembled Christians of all denominations under heaven. Here have united ministers of the whole scattered and sundered church of Christ in the world. Here have labored those who have been divided by all sorts of prejudices and contradictory systems of theology in their past lives and relations to the church. I do not exaggerate when I say that each one is ready now to rise and testify to his very great gladness in the communion of the work and worship which we have had. Where this thing will end, who can prophesy? Certainly there has been perfect harmony in this work. All the differences of conviction have been lost in the common aim and end. It seems to me as though we have caught the music in mid air, as though from a high point of ascent, we have been listening to the songs and sounds and discords of earth. In our high places of experience, all the discordant things have been silenced, whilst the glad chorus in union alone has reached our ears. There may be differences among Christians, there may be jealousies and envyings and enmity. God be praised, we know

nothing about them. I testify before God and the church, that beneath the canvas we have had not even a suspicion of them. The joy has voiced itself in a chorus of loving song. Now these friends and Christian workers who have aided us, return to their own churches. I am very thankful that out of the six hundred persons who have been brought to an acknowledgement of Christ in this tent, less than one-sixth have proposed themselves as members of this Church. A number of the pastors of neighboring churches will to-night testify, by letter and in person, that many of those who found the way of life in the tent, have entered into church relations with them. Some such new church members are before me. You are to go back from this place of privilege and this sphere of obligation to your own churches. Bear with you our salutation in the gospel and work of Christ. Dear friends, see that you carry the gladness with you. Be sure that you take the brightness home to cheer the spirits of pastors and people to whom you come. Be known not by officiousness, not by affected sanctimoniousness, not by assumed over-piety, but by the witness of a submissive life, by a constancy of consecration and effort, by a quietness that can have only one explanation. O, may the world and the churches declare of you: "They have been with Jesus and have learned of Him." You will have, as did Nehemiah, inducements enough to come down from the high plane of life and privilege upon which you have entered, to the level of the world. There will be conflict and calls to controversy. There have not been lacking during these weeks all sorts of efforts to bring us from the simplicity of our work; but with Nehemiah learn to say, "I have a great work to do; I cannot come down." There is no time for self-defence. In this age of earnestness, there is no time for apologies either of men or motives or methods. We have a great work to do; let us do it in a spirit of gladness wherever God in *His* providence may appoint us.

III. Then as a last thought, not only may we justify this joy, and invite you to join in this song, but suggest how you can MAKE THIS JOY YOUR STRENGTH. This is the practical result of the gladness. Let it not sink into sentiment. In the eighth chapter of the book of Nehemiah, at the tenth verse, the instruction is given us most distinctly, that: "The joy of the Lord is your strength," Every successful army goes forth to battle with song. How cheering the notes of the sailor as he heaves the anchor or hoists the sail to the song of his rude melody. Luther sang the Reformation into the hearts of the people. No great work for God has ever been accomplished except in the spirit of song and gladness. Some one has well said "Let me write the songs of the people, and you may write their laws." It is this spirit of joy which is the controlling master-spirit among men.

Your joy is the measure of your strength. Just in the degree of your perception of privilege in God through Christ, just according to this pulse-beat is your actual vigor in the Christian life. There could be no other evidence of spiritual health given except this. I know of no reason that can be suggested to any soul why he has love to God, save the one, that he enjoys the reconciliation which has been provided for him in the Saviour. The heroes of the church have always been anointed with joy. Doubt disarms, and fears paralyzes the stoutest soldier of the cross. Have no place in your life-plan for either of them. Sing their requiem morning, noon and night. Keep your lives in the joy of the Lord, and as your day, so shall your strength be. If ever troubled in spirit cry mightly with David: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." Self-sacrifice and Christian service are the pastime of joy.

But the joy of the Lord is our strength in another sense. *It is our fortress* as well as our inspiration. One of the old writers says that the Lord bids us enter into this joy, because it is too great a joy to enter into us; and we do make our entrance into the joy of acccptance and thanksgiving as into a stronghold. What seductions to evil can reach a man who has the consciousness of Divine favor and the Divine communion? How can afflictions cast such an one down? How shall persecution trouble him? He sings when everybody else weeps. He stands when everybody else falls. He glorifies God though the whole world forsakes Him.

O, dear Christian workers, clap your hands; give praise unto God, who hath made you competent for this vast work. Praise His gracious providence, who has led you as by the cloud of His own guiding care, and has filled the tabernacle with His glory..

A sad thought introduces itself as with these words I close our summer's work. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and some of you are not saved." This is a tone of bitterness in our great gladness. How I long to bring you into the joy of the reconciled to-night. Dear friends, look to that Saviour who alone can give you life and strength. Repose on Him in this hour of new thought and desire. Come now, before we separate, take your part with us, in the tribute of glory to the Father, who hath loved us, to the Son, who hath redeemed us, and to the Spirit, who calls lost sinners from sin unto holiness, and from earth to heaven.

The final hour of the great work was devoted to short addresses by several clergymen of various denominations, who had

so unselfishly, so generously, so nobly given their support to the movement.

The Rev. Chas. F. Deems, D.D., of the Church of the Strangers, said the hand of the Lord had clearly been with the brethren throughout the whole revival. A great advantage was derived from so many clergymen having participated in the services, for as no two men were alike, God had so fashioned and moulded them as to reach the hearts of hundreds of sinners. His advice was this: Every man to his room, every woman to her closet—every unconverted soul who had attended the Gospel Tent regularly—and let them say, "Lord, I have heard them all, every one; now speak to my soul Thyself this night." In conclusion he said the work would leave its mark in the city, especially as it was purely undenominational. Let Christians sink all differences of opinions, and pray unitedly: "O, Lord, grant unto us a knowledge of Thy truth in this world, and in the world to come life everlasting."

The Rev. J. Spencer Kennard, of the Thirty-third street Baptist Church, spoke in strong and hearty sympathy with the work, and said that his own church had received a substantial accession of strength from it, for which he was truly grateful to God and to the originator of the movement.

The Rev. Thomas Armitage, D.D., in a characteristic and humorous address, said it had afforded him very great pleasure to assist in the summer evangelization of the city, a work much needed, and hitherto sadly neglected, and he had had the privilege of recommending and procuring men like the Rev. Joseph Odell, of Brooklyn, and the Rev. George Lamb, of England, to preach in the tent.

The Rev. J. D. Herr, of the Central Baptist Church, said his own people had been thoroughly aroused and quickened by the great and unprecedented work, and he hoped and believed the future would show still greater things, especially during the coming winter.

Messrs. Perkins and Thatcher sang as a duet, the following hymn, from Mr. Ira D. Sankey's collection:—

All the way my Saviour leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who through life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell?
For I know, whate'er befall me,
Jesus doeth all thing well.

All the way my Saviour leads me;
Cheers each winding path I tread;
Gives me grace for every trial,
Feeds me with the living bread;

Tho' my weary steps may falter,
And my soul athirst may be,
Gushing from the Rock before me,
Lo! a spring of joy I see.

All the way my Saviour leads me;
Oh, the fulness of His love!
Perfect rest to me is promised
In my Father's house above;
When my spirit, cloth'd immortal,
Wings its flight to realms of day,
This my song through endless ages—
Jesus led me all the way.

"May the grace of God our Father, the love of Jesus Christ our Saviour, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost our Comforter, be with and remain among us, now and forever. Amen."

So closed the first real summer revival in New York city. God grant that next year, not merely one Gospel Tent, but twenty may be distributed throughout its area, and that worship under canvas may become universal.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WINNING SOULS TO JESUS, AND SOULS WON.

"He that winneth souls is wise."—*Proverbs xi.*, 30.

It is universally conceded that the inquiry room is an indispensable adjunct to all evangelistic services. Men are lost in the mass, who listen to general truth, and are often [illegible] bewildered than blessed by their first awakening. The Christian atmosphere around them—the voice of prayer and song, the fervent earnestness of the preacher who cares more for the listeners than they do for themselves—all these are new and strange experiences to "this world," whose sole thought is to "eat and drink for to-morrow we die." Men are born skeptics in regard to "disinterested love," and are very incredulous when they are first besieged and besought to return to their Father's house.

Many an inquirer has gone from a religious service with the thought "no *man* careth for *my* soul," until he has met that man in the inquiry room. It is natural for him to think that the speaker cares more for the crowd in general, than for him; and in the soul's loneliness, it cares more for one man's interest than the multitude. It is a revelation to such souls that there is "joy in heaven over *one* sinner that repenteth." On earth, one soul often seems too little to make a fuss about. This, then, is his experience as the inquirer turns into a room where some one has time and thought to "sup with him," and offer His bread in return.

Here, in the inquiry room, the anxious one faces persons rather than principles. He, himself, is the object of interest, and not his opinions, still less his admiration for the sermon or the speaker. Probably, for the first time, he discovers his own individuality—at least in sin—and this drives him to discover that of the Saviour of sinners. He sees "how these Christians love one another" rather than their theories, and his cold, benumbed

faculties feel grateful for summer-land. The awakened soul instinctively turns, like an awakened child in the dark, to another soul like itself, to see if he, too, is awake, and to inquire *what the darkness means.* "Watchman, tell us of the *night*," is the burden of his inquiry, more than "Tell us of the *day!*" So accustomed has he been to the dark that he shrinks from the light as from an enemy, because it condemns his deeds and darkness. But in the inquiry room he is to learn the glad tidings that *he* is the object loved. The doer of the deed and the dweller in the darkness is called into light, into life, into being; out from loneliness into companionship. In the delicate interest and care for him, by one who loves men, he learns for the first time that he is *worth saving*, and, being cared for by another than himself, that he is like certain lost valuable papers, which are of no use to anybody but the owner, who is really now inquiring for him.

Here it is very important to remember that God Himself is the first Inquirer. Thus far we have considered the awakened and anxious inquirer, but with such an one the hard work has been already begun. Man does not trouble himself about his own position, much less God's. It is his Maker that first inquires, "Adam, where art thou?" The Father is more anxious for His lost child than the child. Men sometimes pray, "Oh, that sinners might be heard inquiring, 'What shall I do to be saved?'" but before that, God must be heard inquiring, "Who told thee thou wast naked?" We have dwelt thus upon the person and position of the "inquirer" in order to thereby define the province and power of his helper, for it is our object, if possible, to aid such servants of Christ, more than to simply describe the work alone in the Gospel Tent, important and valuable though that was.

We Christians know, to our bitter cost, that the trouble is not half so much with the "poor blind Bartimeus" as with us heedless, groping, stumbling disciples, who forget that our mission is not to call them to Christ ourselves, but to say, "Be of good comfort; rise, *He calleth thee.*" Before they can cry, "Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me," *Jesus of Nazareth must pass by!* It is He that caused the cry, and He alone that can hush it. The genuine inquirer is one who has been already "called of God." The title "Christian Worker" is, perhaps, less apt than that of "Christian Believer." Jesus says, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." Therefore, the first essential in Christian service is, the profoundest faith that it is not he "that doeth the works, but the Father that dwelleth in him!" Our work is more with our Father first than with our brother. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all thy* soul." It was Jesus that Bartimeus needed; not the

disciple. We should feel this dependence more if we only remembered that it was "our Father that had done the work" in the inquirer's heart already. God has troubled him with a question which only God can answer. We should not visit but "dwell in the secret place of the Most High," so conscious are we of our nothingness away from Him. The "Throne of Grace" should not be a phrase but a fact to us, and we should remember that the sinner needs the Sovereign's assurance, not ours. We should have faith for him. He is timid and hopeless for himself, but, like the father of the Epileptic, the inquirer's weak faith needs strengthening by the positive and unqualified assurance from our lips that "All things are possible *to* him that believeth,"—not *by* but *to* him—by our Father who doeth the works. Surely He who hath begun the good work of conviction does not leave the converting and sanctifying of man to himself or his brother. Inquirers come into the room wanting everything but what they need, namely, *Christ.* All men are inquirers, but the objects of their search are as many and varied as themselves. They will have "peace" and "assurance of heaven," and, above all, "feeling," yes, and even *faith*; anything, in fact, but *Him.* They would like life, but "Ye will not come unto *Me* that ye might have life!" They would like "rest," and try to give it to themselves or take it from our lips, and, alas! we often try and give it to them! All our working *for* Jesus serves neither Him nor them. Man is ever trying to work himself into God's good graces, forgetting it is the work of God to work His good graces into us, by abiding Himself in our houses.

Next to the Christian's oneness with his God should be his oneness with the sinner. A brother once remarked concerning a poor drunkard: "I could never help that man, for I was never so low down as he!" The trouble with that brother was, he not only had forgotten "the pit whence he was digged," but he never knew its depth and his own degradation. Even as he spoke his spirit was drunk with pride. Sin makes men craven and abject; they shrink from the Christian's presence because of the Pure Presence. But we can establish their confidence by showing our wounds in Satan's service, as Christ Himself never could, for "He knew no sin."

Our name may differ, but our nature is the same. The inquirer's very temptation and failure may have been ours, which shall at least, be a common bond of brotherly sympathy and pity, although only "He who was tempted and knew no sin, can ever succor him.'

Experience teaches that our ears are often more valuable than our lips. Many only seek an argument, not a Saviour; let them have it all. Many play with their real burden by flinging dis-

puted scripture at you; let them empty themselves till they get down to their sin. And again, many have some clearly defined known sin ever between them and Christ; let them roll down their stony heart in the chasm of your ear. Their eyes are constantly riveted upon one point broken in the law; and He who came to fulfil the law may be waiting to begin right there. Many and many come who have been nominally trained in Christian homes, and are nominal members of His church, who long to express their disgust with their hypocrisy; secret feuds in the family; unforgiven debtors, and even creditors, accumulated hoards of self-righteousness, and, underneath it all, a weary body of deathly self; all these they bring for burial in some sympathetic bosom, before they have their ears open to receive. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth must speak," and it is generally full enough of sin. A wise and loving silence, more than speech, may press it out. This negative side of the Christian Worker in the inquiry room is of no less value than the positive. Unstrained faith and unaffected humility on account of his own human nature, will keep him still before the Lord. He will be so near God that he will not have to shout to make Him hear. He will have tender reverence for his brother-workers, and above all for the inquirer. All the more will he bear with the coarse, unsensitive sinner who does not "feel his sins."

A young and fair woman came gaily into the inquiry room, once, saying, "I have come in here to see if I can get under conviction." She toyed with her jeweled watch, as if to say, "I have but five minutes to spare," and shook her golden curls, and tossed her graceful head as if in coquetry. We said to her, "The loving Lord may have to rob you of your beauty to answer your prayer." Another equally fresh and winning character, a young man, said, with the same frankness, "I love my sins, and cannot give them up, even though I *know* they will drag me down to hell; and I see no beauty in Christ that I should desire Him!" Do such poor sinners merit the *horror* of Christians? This young man came night after night. He knew he *needed* Christ, but he did not *want* Him! If the Holy Spirit bears such trifling, surely the human spirit can waive its harsh judgments, and pray Father forgive, for they know not what they do. The inquirer has heard that "God was in the world, reconciling man unto Himself." Now, when he goes into the inquiry room, he needs to find Christian believers, who emphasize that gospel; not those who prove their doubt by officiously trying to do God's work for Him, praying Him to come who has already come, or praying the inquirer to come to One who has already "come to seek and save that which was lost." Every word of the worker should be God's —not His letter, but His Word, (Christ;) not His scripture alone,

but His Spirit. The very feeling of distance from, and fear of God, is produced by His own near voice calling the anxious one. They need encouragement by showing them Him. We should believe, if they do not, that God is not far from any one of them. Our name should be Emmanuel—God with *us*.

In concluding our general remarks on inquiry room work, we wish to state that the most important thing in connection with such a portion of evangelistic labor is the suitability of the Christian who is appointed leader of the helpers. Such a post does not merely demand a sincere anxiety for souls, and deep earnestness of manner, but the leader must be a person of discrimination,—one who can judge an inquirer the moment he enters the room, and assign to him a helper suited to his character and apparent state of mind. The leader should also see that quietness and freedom from anything like excitement is maintained; and, under no circumstances, should praying aloud, or breaking out into song, be allowed. In a word, the leader should be an old experienced Christian, at once earnest, courteous, discriminating and sober.

Many intensely interesting and instructive incidents are constantly occurring in such a work as that at the tent. Between 2,500 and 3,000 souls sought counsel in the inquiry room. Upwards of 600 known cases of conversion occurred. Who can tell how many others were led into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus? We give a few illustrative cases showing the working of the Holy Spirit.

Mrs. P's daughter had lost her only child—a little girl of 10. Both were overcome with grief, but the daughter was delirious. Every worldly good had been given the child, but no spiritual. They only knew our Lord but to fear Him. He says we shall have no other God before Him, and He takes this idol to give them a chance to think of Him, the Creator, more than the creature, and find time to worship Him and prepare for eternity. Our good Lord was kind enough to knock thus at her door, who had refused all other calls, before He turned away, and she listened. May God bless this, His knocking, to some reader.

Helper.—Well, my dear woman, what words can I say to comfort you?

Inquirer.—I am sure I cannot tell.

Help.—If you don't know, I'm sure I've no idea what you are longing for.

Inq.—My dear sir, my cup of sorrow is full to the brim and running over, and I can find no peace—it is more than I can bear —I know it is what I deserve, for I have never paid any attention to God. But, alas, I have made up my mind that when we think

more of the things of this world than of God, He will take them away, as He has our little darling. It was hard to part with her, and what is worse, yes, far worse, I am afraid we shall never see her again. I am afraid I will never get to heaven. I am afraid it is too late for me to be a Christian. I am too old to begin to love God, and have my sins forgiven, by (as so many kind Christians say) "Simply trust in God." I have prayed most all the time since she left us, read my Bible, and cried to God and listened to Christians, and come to the tent, and done my best to please Him, hoping He would forgive me. But I am about giving up—I can't feel it; I have tried so hard, night and day, my heart is most broken. I would do anything to feel as some Christians say they do.

Help.—As to your *worldly* trouble, I am heartily sorry for you and sympathise deeply—but as to your spiritual trouble I cannot agree with you. Jesus Christ says to me "Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out," and I believe Him.

Inq.—O yes, I know, but I can't seem to know or feel when I have come to Him. I am doing as Christian friends tell me, but I can't feel happy. I do my *best* and hope God will help me.

Help.—Well, my dear madam, my God forgives me for doing my *worst*. The same God that tells you you are lost, tells me I am saved. I believe Him and you don't. Your mind acknowledges God but your heart has not accepted Him.

Inq.—I don't want to find at the last I am self-deceived by being too sure that I am forgiven and saved.

Help.—God says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." And "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven." Believing He is here, let us ask Him, for Christ's sake, that He will speak through me to you words that may let you see the truth as it is in His Word, so you may realize and see and know your Saviour—for my God is prayer-answering and hearing.

Inq.—With all my heart. I'm willing to do anything to know He loves me and will forgive my sins.—(Brief prayer.)

Help.—Now, listen without saying one word. May He soften your heart that you may *believe* (I do not say *feel*) it. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Now God being true, this proves He loves us whether we feel it or not. His Son says to John, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you." "Ye are my friends." "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." Now God does not condemn you for what you have done, but for not believing Him, and for rejecting His offer of salvation. Whenever any doubt

enters your mind, just say, "my God tells me to the contrary." Believe and stop trying to feel—as we read now. What you do not feel, just say, "my God tells me so, and I believe Him." "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Inq.—I have called and am saved; God says so.

Help.—"Now is the accepted time: now is the day of salvation."

Inq.—Now is the time for me to come; God says so.

Help.—"All we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned every one his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Inq.—My iniquity is laid on Him; God says so.

Help.—"Who His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree."

Inq.—He has borne my sins in His body on the tree; God says so.

Help.—"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross."

Inq.—He has blotted out the handwriting against me; God says so.

Help.—"Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life."

Inq.—I have heard it, I believe, *and must have life;* God says so.

Full of emotion had she listened, and as she said "I believe and must have life," a faint smile stole over her countenance amidst her tears. I asked what it meant, but she could say nothing. I said, "I don't wonder you are happy." Her emotion overcame her, and she said, "I believe I feel better, and if my dear daughter could only feel as I do. Just as soon as I can, as soon as I dare, I will talk with her."

Help.—My dear friend, just think when you leave this place, my God says so, and that you must believe always before you can feel what it is to be a Christian.

Towards the close of the tent services, one evening in October, two gentlemen engaged in a considerable business in this city came to Mr. R., who has re-produced their words as near as possible in a condensed form. They said: We have been for years friends in business, in pleasure and in sin. We have been companions, and have gone to many of the worst sinks of iniquity in the city. One raised his hair and showed a deep scar received during a drunken brawl only a few days previously. "Now," they said, "we have sinned together, and we want to be saved together. We know we are going to hell, we feel we are lost

sinners, but it does seem so very hard to be a Christian, and there is so much to do." Bitter tears attested the heart-felt sincerity of the confession made for both by one, "and yet," the speaker remarked, nodding at his companion, "he is better than me; there is much good in him." Till a late hour Mr. R. sat with them, explaining the Word of God, making each read and re-read passages till their meaning became plain, and the light seemed to dawn. From that day to this they have been most regular in their attendance at all the meetings, and give every sign, as far as man's eye can see, that the work so marvellously begun by the Spirit of God shall be continued until the day of Christ. Both have become regular members of the church.

An actress, who was a Roman Catholic, and was engaged in a troupe temporarily playing in New York, came to the tent accompanied by her mother-in-law, who was a Christian. She heard the Rev. Dr. Tyng, jr., preach from the text, "One shall say I am the Lord's." It was the first time she had been to a protestant place of worship. Upon her return home that night, she stated to her husband that it was her fixed determination to become a Christian. She attended the evening service in the tent about ten days after her first visit, and was deeply impressed by a sermon on the text "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus," preached by the Rev. William S. Rainsford. In response to the invitation given in the after-meeting, she was one of many who stood up for the prayers of God's people, and subsequently retired into the inquiry room where the "old, old story of Jesus and His love," in all its simplicity and beauty was gently placed before her by a lady worker. An earnest season of prayer was held, and though she was deeply conscious of her need of the Saviour, she could not be induced that night, to forsake her profession for the Lord. The stage, and all its demoralizing and baleful influences, stood between her and her God. It was her living, and her husband, too, was opposed to anything approaching Christianity. No doubt he would sneeringly say it was mere sentiment and folly, when the poor, anxious soul told him about the matter. The next news heard of her was brought by her mother-in-law, who stated that she had found that "peace which passeth all understanding," and was perfectly happy, and had resolved to forsake all and follow her Lord and Master. May God Almighty sustain her in all grace and strength.

B———d, a young man of moral character, but a non-church-goer, had a child born to him, when a "sweet, still voice" whispered to him, and he made up his mind that he would give his off-

spring a Christian home, and for that purpose went to the Gospel Tent *with the express object of being taught how to become a Christian himself.* Here is a glorions instance of the peculiar and unsearchable ways of God in bringing men to the Lord Jesus Christ. The young man's father had been a drunkard, and the thoughts of his own wretched childhood home also had its effect upon bringing him to the determination of seeking the Saviour. He came and listened, and need it be added that the Father met him? "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." God is true to His Holy Word, and young B———d's morality is now beautified with godliness. He learnt the lesson, that morality without godliness is like a flower without fragrance, and now claims Jesus as his Prophet, Priest and King—his Friend and Elder Brother.

R———, a gambler, was persuaded to come to the services by a once boon companion, but who had found the Saviour during the evangelistic labors of Messrs. Moody and Sankey, in New York City. On the night in question, he had started to his place of employment, a gambling-hell, when the young convert met him, and ultimately induced him to come and hear this curious gospel that had turned a gambler, a drunkard, and a reprobate, into an honest, sober, loving, respectable member of society. R——— had ocular demonstration of this fact in the person of his past "chum" and present friend, who was doing his Master's work. He heard the sermon entitled "Let us alone!" in chapter XII of this volume, and the Holy Spirit entirely broke him down. He went into the inquiry room completely prostrated, and then and there accepted salvation with deep thankfulness and joy. He forsook his nefarious employment without a question, notwithstanding he had a wife and two little children dependant on him for support. He was out of work for some time, but was, at last, appointed a conductor on the 8th Avenue Railroad. He is constantly heard of, and is steadfast in the faith; and has been used by the gracious Lord in bringing a companion in the gambling profession to a knowledge of the truth.

An elderly man, a Swedenborgian, strayed into the tent by accident, and heard the Rev. Wm. Lloyd preach from the words "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Chap. XI.) He was impressed and stayed behind, apparently being unable to leave the place.

Christian Worker.—Are you seeking to accept this great salvation?

Inquirer.—I don't know. (The answer was given with an oath, and in a morose manner.)

C. W.—What are you staying for?

Inq.—I don't know. Perhaps I should like to be saved; but I believe that I have a cold, hard heart without any feeling in it. I have no love in my nature. I almost hate everybody I see, and yet I somehow believe the Bible, but it is no good to me. What good is it to you?

C. W.—Through belief on it, if I were to die just now I should go to heaven instead of being cast into hell. But that is only a little of the good it does me. It teaches me all things and makes me love you and wish that you may be saved from everlasting destruction. But you say you believe God's Word? Is that so?

Inq.—Yes; at least, I suppose I do.

C. W.—Are you acquainted with God's plan of salvation?

Inq.—Oh, yes. I know the Bible well, but cannot help thinking religion is, after all, nothing but humbug.

C. W.—And that is what you call believing God's Word? Listen: "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Do you believe that?

Inq.—I don't understand that.

C. W.—That does not matter. Remember, it is God who speaks the words. Does He tell the truth, or lie?

Inq.—I have no doubt it is true.

C. W.—Very well. Now let us see if God does not explain what being "born again" actually means. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ *is* born of God." Are you born of God?

Inq.—I don't believe I am.

C. W.—Then you do *not* believe that Jesus is the Christ?

Inq.—Yes, I do.

C. W.—Then God is a liar if you are not born again. Please read the words yourself.

Inq.—They are simple enough, but I do not feel that I am born of God.

C. W.—And yet you say you believe God, and He tells *you* that if *you* believe Jesus is the Christ you are born of God. Therefore you either do not believe Him or His Word is not true. Listen again: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." Now I want to tell you, my dear sir, that nine months ago I was a very fast man—living in great sin. God converted me, and since then I have been enabled, by His power, to forsake all my bad habits, and to live an entirely new life. He gave me a new heart, put a clean spirit within me, and fresh aspirations and desires. He created me a new man in Christ Jesus, through whom I have eternal life; and I know that when I die that where my Saviour is there shall I be also. Do you believe I speak truthfully?

Inq.—Certainly, I do.

C. W.—And yet you do not believe God—you receive my statement and reject His, which is above all. Listen: "He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. *And this is the record*, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Have you, my brother, eternal life through Christ Jesus, in whom you say you believe?

Inq.—I must have according to God, for I *do* believe Jesus died to save sinners. But do you think He will forgive me for my fifty years sinful life?

C. W.—Listen again: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." "Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures." "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Do you now believe God will forgive your sins?

Inq.—He has forgiven them.

C. W.—What! Are you then saved?

Inq.—I think so.

C. W.—Are you "born of God," and have you life eternal through Christ Jesus?

Inq.—I *must* have, if God is true, and I believe He is true. I *am* saved.

C. W.—Then you believe you are saved from hell, and that through the work of Jesus you will attain heaven when you die?

Inq.—Yes, sir.

C. W.—What then?

Inq.—I ought to thank God for His goodness.

The self-styled hard-hearted man, with tears in his eyes, knelt on his knees and, for the first time in fifty years, poured out his soul to God Almighty for having given him an everlasting salvation, and he also prayed for the worker whom God had permitted to speak the word of eternal life. Glory and honor to the Most High.

We could multiply, to almost any length, cases of equal, if not more, interest than the foregoing, but enough has been given to show how the Lord blessed this portion of the work. Not a night passed in the tent without some sinners declaring saving faith in Jesus, and among them were several Roman Catholics, Swedenborgians, Universalists, Jews and Infidels. Of the latter class, there were some very remarkable cases, especially one of a

lady in high position, who had been a skeptic and a scoffer for thirty years. She was well read in infidelity, and came to the tent with the object of triumphing over Christianity by argument, but God in His mercy revealed Himself to her. Of the Roman Catholics, Jews, Swedenborgians, etc., who professed conversion, they all gave good evidence of its reality. The correspondence received from converts of all classes is very interesting and instructive, but the difficulty of selection is too great, having regard to space. However, if any of our readers are specially interested in the particulars of these or any other cases, we will endeavor to furnish them, if practicable, on application being made to us.

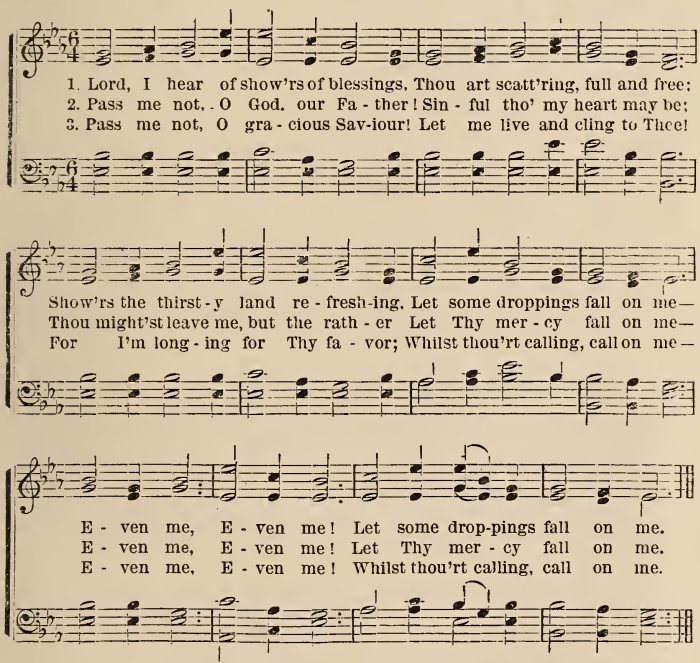
CHAPTER XXVII.

GOSPEL TENT HYMNS AND TUNES.

BY THEODORE E. PERKINS.

EVEN ME.

Mrs. Eliz. Codner. Theodore E. Perkins.



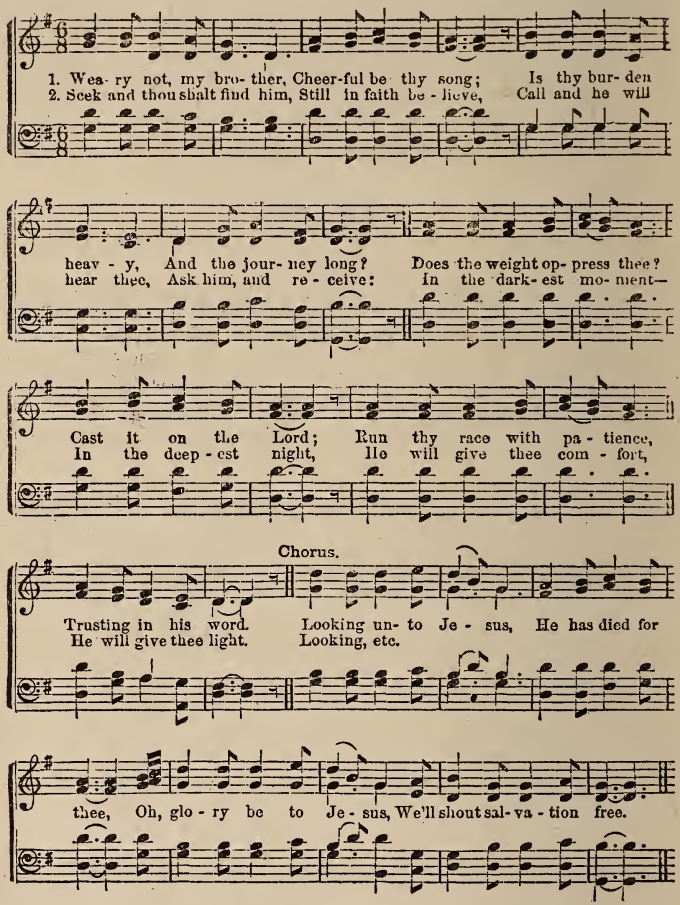
4 Pass me not, O mighty Spirit,
Thou canst make the blind to see;
Testify of Jesus' merit!
Speak some word of power to me.
Even me, Even me!
Speak some word of power to me.

5 Love of God—so pure and changeless,
Blood of Christ—so rich, so free;
Grace of God—so strong and boundless,
Magnify it all in me!
Even me, Even me!
Magnify it all in me!

From "Calvary Songs," by per.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

FANNY CROSBY. THEODORE E. PERKINS.

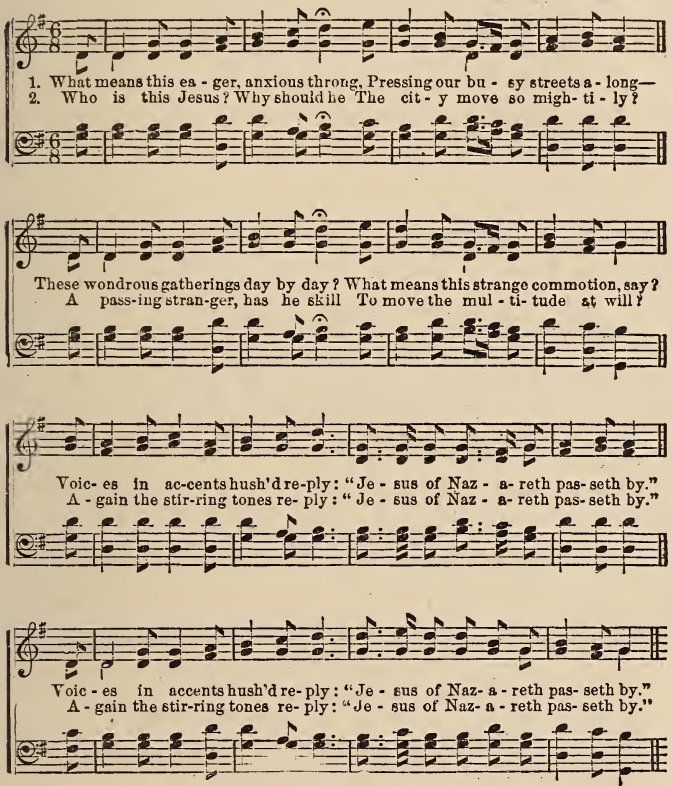


3. Trials may befall thee,
Thorns beset thy way,
Never mind them, brother,
Only watch and pray:
Through the vale of sorrow
Once the Saviour trod;
Run thy race with patience,
Pressing on to God

4. Labor on, my brother,
Thou shall reap at last
Fruits of Joy eternal,
When thy work is past;
Crowds of shining angels
View thee from the skies,
Run thy race with patience,
Yonder is the prize.

JESUS OF NAZARETH PASSETH BY.

THEODORE E. PERKINS.



3. Jesus! 'tis he who once below
Man's pathway trod, 'mid pain and woe;
And burdened hearts, where'er he came,
Brought out their sick, and deaf, and lame.
Blind men rejoiced to hear the cry:
"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

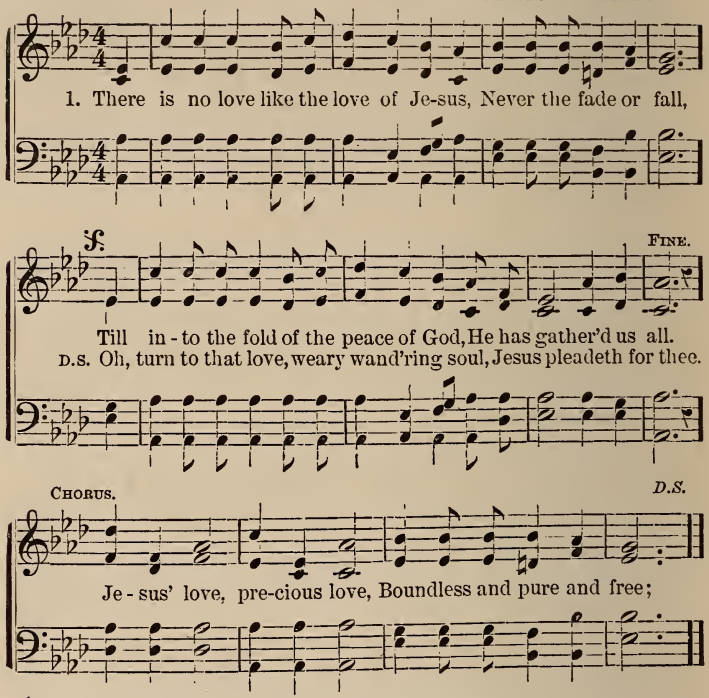
4. Again he comes! From place to place
His holy footprints we can trace.
He pauses at our threshold—nay,
He enters—condescends to stay.
Shall we not gladly raise the cry,
"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

5. Ho! all ye heavy-laden come!
Here's pardon, comfort, rest, and home.
Lost wanderers from a Father's face
Return, accept his proffered grace.
Ye tempted, there's a refuge nigh,
"Jesus of Nazareth passeth by."

6. But if you still this call refuse,
And do such wondrous love abuse,
Soon will he sadly from you turn,
Your bitter prayer for pardon spurn.
"Too late! too late!" will be the cry—
"Jesus of Nazareth *hath passed by.*"

LOVE OF JESUS.

THEODORE E. PERKINS.



2 There is no heart like the heart of Jesus,
Filled with a tender love;
No throb nor throe that our hearts can know,
But He feels it above.—CHO.

3 There is no eye like the eye of Jesus,
Piercing so far away;
Ne'er out of the sight of its tender light
Can the wanderer stray.—CHO.

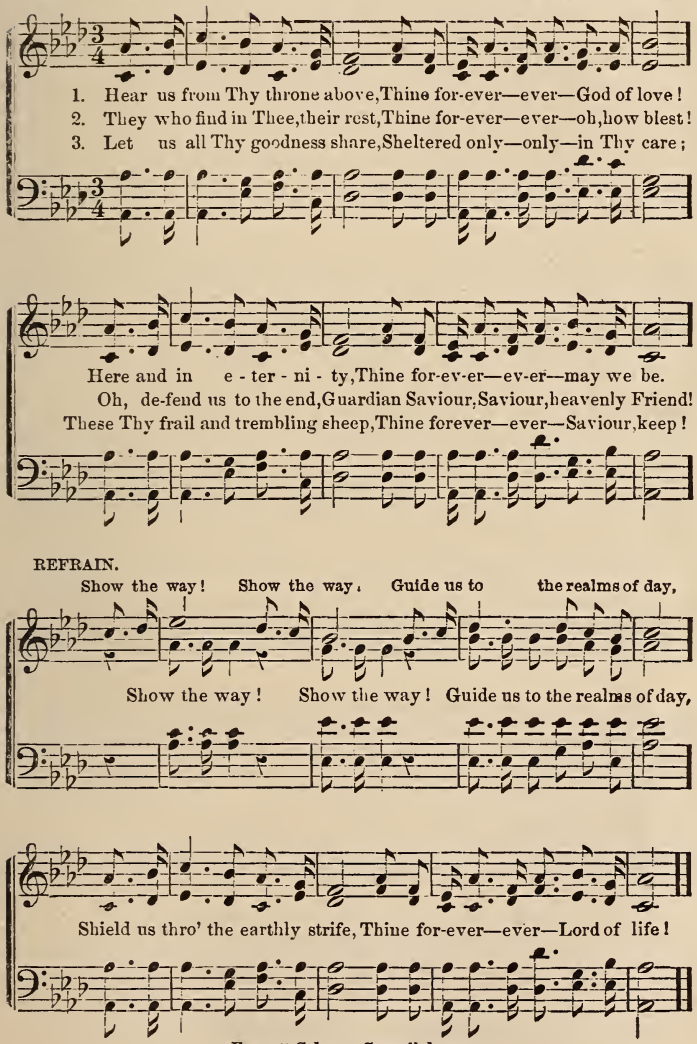
4 There is no voice like the voice of Jesus,
Tender and sweet its chime,
Like musical ring of the flowing spring
In the bright summer time.—CHO.

5 Oh, let us hark to the voice of Jesus;
Oh, may we never roam,
Till safe we rest on His loving breast,
In the dear heavenly home.—CHO.

From "Songs of Salvation," by per.

THINE FOREVER.

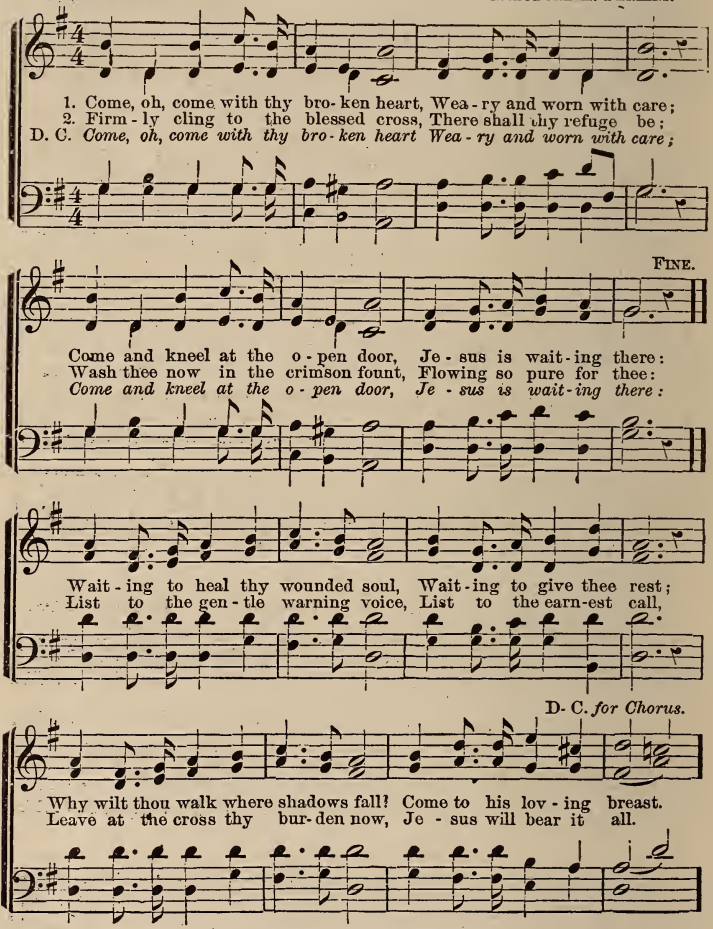
M. F. MAUDE. THEODORE E. PERKINS.



From "Calvary Songs," by per.

COME, OH, COME WITH THY BROKEN HEART.

FANNY CROSBY. THEODORE E. PERKINS.

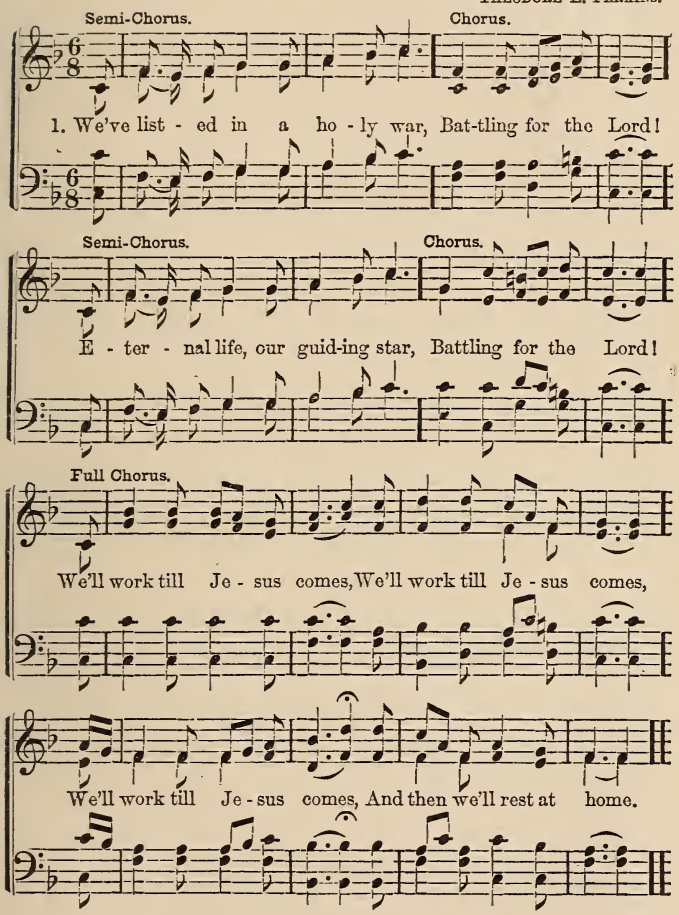


3 Come and taste of the precious feast,
Feast of eternal love:
Think of joys that forever bloom,
Bright in the life above:
Come with a trusting heart to God,
Come and be saved by grace;
Come, for he loves to clasp thee now,
Close in his dear embrace.—*Cho.*

From "Calvary Songs," by per.

BATTLING FOR THE LORD.

THEODORE E. PERKINS.



2.

We've girded on our armor bright,
Battling for the Lord!
Our captain's word our strength and might,
Battling for the Lord!—CHO.

3.

We'll stand like heroes on the field,
Battling for the Lord!
And nobly fight but never yield,
Battling for the Lord!- CHO.

4.

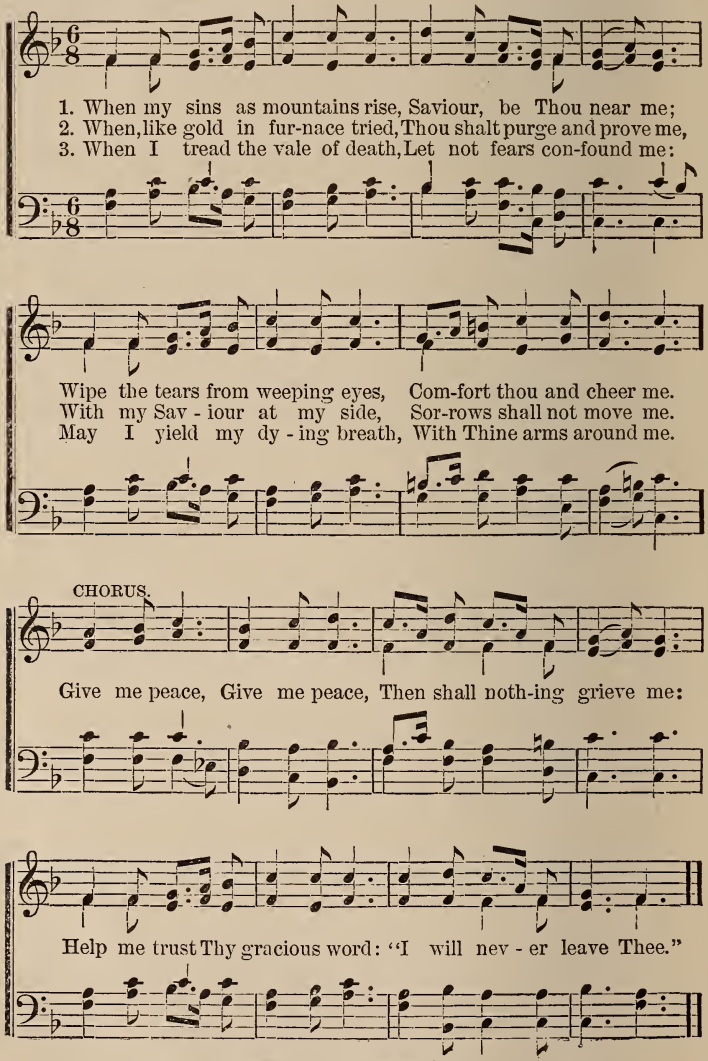
Though sin and death our way oppose,
Battling for the Lord!
Through grace we'll conquer all our foes,
Battling for the Lord!—CHO.

5.

And when our glorious war is o'er,
Battling for the Lord!
We'll shout salvation evermore,
Battling for the Lord!—CHO.

I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE.

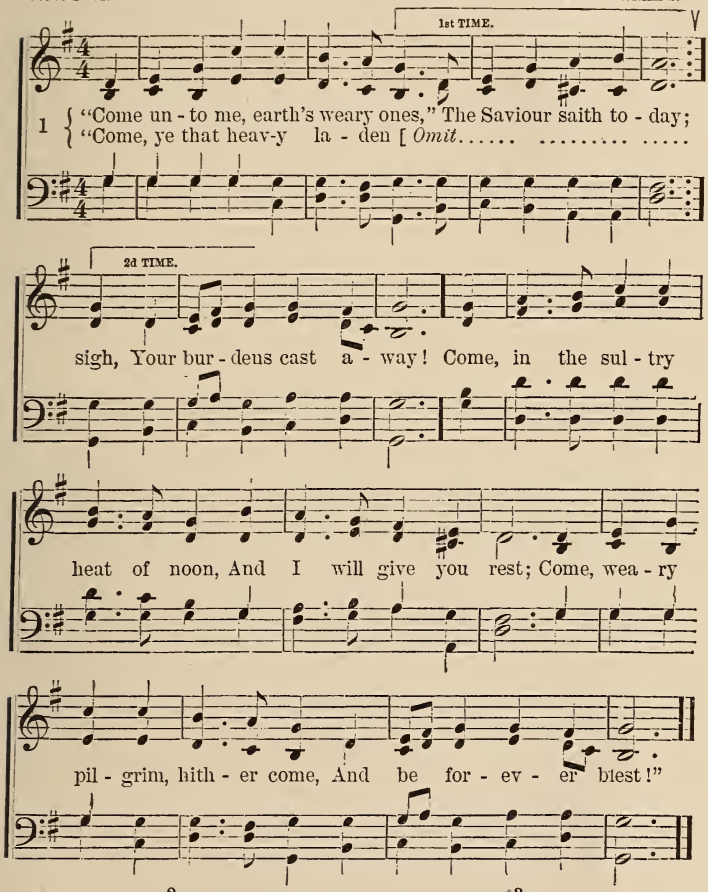
Rev. A. T. Pierson, D. D. Theodore E. Perkins.



From "Calvary Songs," by per.

COME UNTO ME.

Rev. P. A. HANNAFORD. THEODORE E. PERKINS.



2.

Lord Jesus! now thy voice we hear,
No longer we delay!
From earthly hopes and vain desires,
Our spirits turn away.
Thy voice, O Teacher most divine!
With gentle tones so sweet,
Comes o'er us mid the din of earth,
And stays our wandering feet.

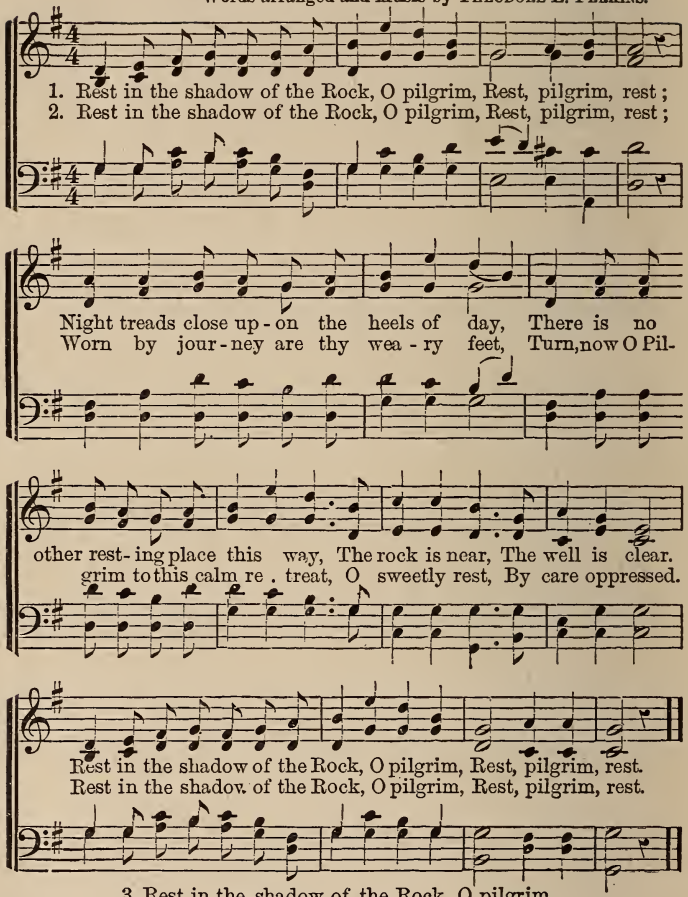
3.

Rest, rest in thee! my spirit longs
For calm and sweet repose:
To have my soul a tranquil lake
Whereon faith's lily grows.
I claim thy promise, gracious Lord!
Thy love to comfort me,
Repenting, hoping, loving now,
O Christ! I come to thee.

From "Calvary Songs." by per.

REST, PILGRIM, REST.

Words arranged and Music by THEODORE E. PERKINS.

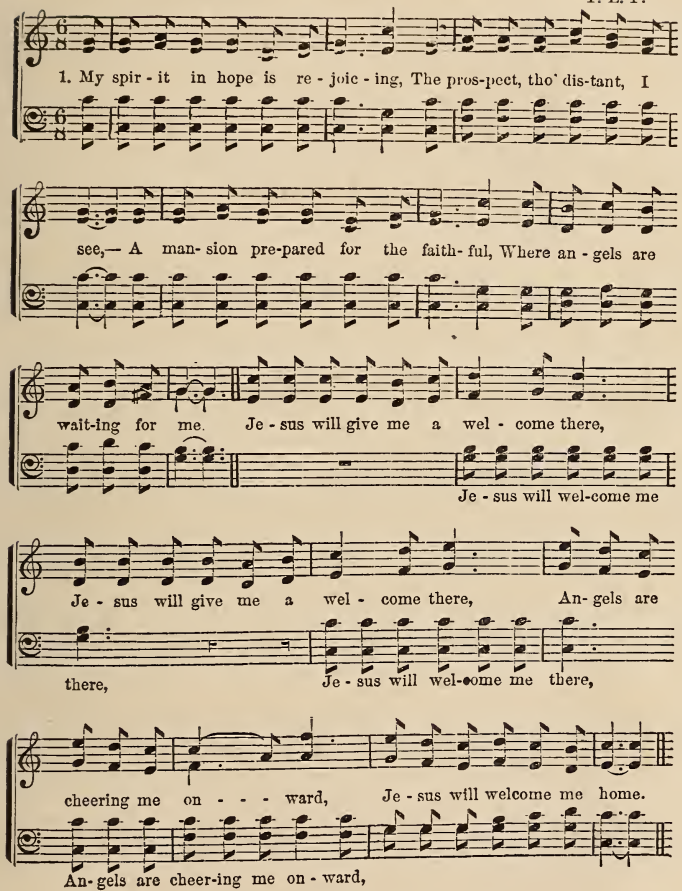


3 Rest in the shadow of the Rock, O pilgrim,
Rest, pilgrim, rest.
They who slumber by the Rock so dear,
Wake rejoicing, for their home is near,
Beneath its shade,
Thy bed is made.
Rest in the shadow of the Rock, O pilgrim,
Rest, pilgrim, rest.

From "Calvary Songs," by per.

JESUS WILL WELCOME ME.

T. E. P.

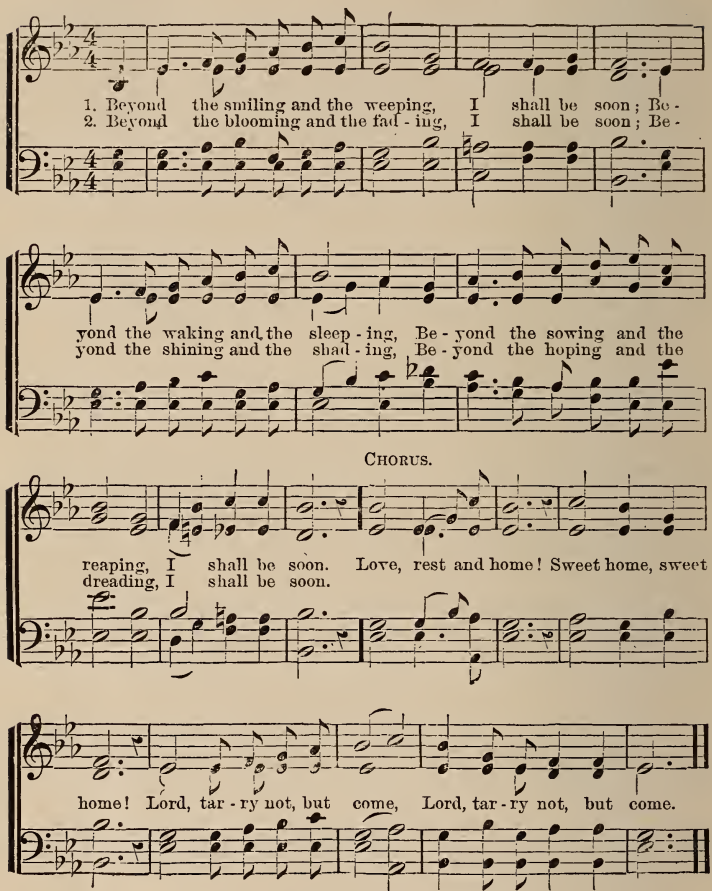


2. How sweet are the visions of rapture,
Which often by faith I behold:
The saints in their garments of beauty,
A city where streets are of gold!—CHO.

3. Dear Saviour, I long to behold thee,
I long in thy image to rise;
Oh, when, like a bird on its pinions,
Say, when shall I soar to the skies?—CHO.

BEYOND THE SMILING AND THE WEEPING.

Rev. H. Bonar, D.D. Theodore E. Perkins.



3 Beyond the parting and the meeting,
I shall be soon;
Beyond the farewell and the greeting,
Beyond the pulse's fever beating,
I shall be soon. *Cho.*

4 Beyond the frost-chain and the fever,
I shall be soon;
Beyond the rock-waste and the river,
Beyond the ever and the never,
I shall be soon. *Cho.*

From "Calvary Songs," by per.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SOWING THE SEED.

PAPER ON THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL TENT OF THE BROOKLYN YOUNG * MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, DURING THE SUMMER OF 1876.

The idea of gospel services for the masses under canvas during the summer season has been more than once suggested and considered. But it was not until the present year that the success of the services originated in New York by Rev. Dr. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., decided the Executive Committee of the Christian Work Committee,† to adopt a similar plan, appeal to the generosity of the Christian public for support, secure the preaching of Christ to the neglected classes, and trust the Divine power for spiritual results.

In the selection of a site on which to erect the tent, we were guided in our choice by the fact that thousands of people, in search of health, pleasure and recreation throng to Prospect Park every Sabbath afternoon. By the generous permission of property owners in the vicinity, ground was readily secured on Union Street, near 9th Avenue, in one of the most beautiful locations on Long Island, within a moment's walk of the plaza fountain and the main entrance to the Park, and overlooking in the distance a portion of New York bay, with its bright waters and white shipping. One might well exclaim, "Beautiful for situation."

The tent erected is circular in shape, one hundred feet in

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* Prepared by A. S. Emmons.

† This Committee consists of L. D. Mason, M.D., A. S. Emmons, Robert G. Hann, J. F. Snedeker, Dr. Mattison, and John P. Adams, President of the Association, *ex-officio*. They have been materially assisted by Alanson Trask, John French, Chas. H. Dutcher, C. H. Dillingham, Alonzo Alford, F. B. Beers, Juan Alzamora, and others.

diameter, forty feet high at the centre-pole, and in every way a neat and pleasant structure. All necessary accommodations were provided for the health and comfort of attendants; flooring with carpeted aisles, chairs arranged as at the Rink and Hippodrome, and ventilation without draught by means of a new pattern of side curtains. During the day the crimson streamer with "B. Y. M. C. A. Gospel Tent," in white letters in striking contrast with the canvas, attracted the attention of every passer-by. At night, when illuminated within, and surrounded by colored lights without, it was seen from a distance, and presented an even more beautiful appearance. In the interior, scripture texts in black letters on white cards were placed on each wall-pole, thus preaching the gospel through the eyes as well as the ears of the people. Suspended over the platform,—provided for the speakers, the choir, and special visitors—was a banner bearing the words of the angelic song over the plains of Bethlehem, "Peace on earth and good will to men." On the reverse of the scarlet screen at the main entrance to the tent, a most precious text was arranged in a way at once novel and alike calculated for artistic effect and spiritual impression. On a ground of gray, in black, white and crimson letters, as most appropriate, the words were spelled "Though your sins be as SCARLET they shall be as WHITE as SNOW; though they be RED like CRIMSON, they shall be as WOOL." Whatever good may have been accomplished by this text, in this place, as it met the sight of so many hundreds every Sabbath, will be a striking instance of the importance of little things, as it was suggested by a conversation overheard in a car.

In the arrangements for the tent services the importance of sacred music was recognized. Often there is more power in a song than a sermon. In the awakening of dead souls to life, the Holy Spirit often uses the groanings of conscience, the breathings of penitence, the aspirations of faith, embodied in some simple hymn, when the most eloquent appeals of the preacher are powerless.

A choir of about one hundred voices, with a cornet and organ accompaniment, were secured at the beginning, and were always faithful in attendance and earnest in the endeavor to lead the congregation in devotional singing, and not to sing for them as a merely artistic performance. The singing was at all the services, an act of worship.

In a slight sketch, like the present, it is not possible to give an account in detail of all the meetings that were held. A brief outline of services, in order of time, must suffice.

July 16th.—On this day the tent was dedicated. About fifteen hundred people were present. The president of the Association began the exercises by a few words fitly spoken, in

regard to the object of these out-door services. The venerable preacher, Rev. William S. Plummer, D. D., offered the opening prayer. "All hail the power of Jesus' name," was sung by the choir and congregation. Rev. Thomas Crowther read the scripture selection, and after singing "There is a fountain filled with blood," the Rev. Dr. Cuyler delivered a short and stirring address, of which we give here only a few words:

"When the disciples caught nothing near the land our Lord told then to launch out into the deep, where fish were plenty. The Young Men's Association had come over to this thoroughfare to fling out their nets for souls, and the idea was a common-sense one from a Christian standpoint. Their doors were thrown wide open for all who chose to come. There were some houses that the laws of God and the commonwealth forbid man to enter on the Sabbath. When people did enter them they had to do it by stealth. Not so with this Gospel Tent. Its promoters' purpose was not to harm the body, but to do the body and soul good. They did not offer poison, but the water of life. This place was dedicated to the observance of the Sabbath day, to public morality, to the saving of souls, to every high and holy purpose for which the human voice can be lifted. He trusted that now the work was commenced, there would be no backward steps; that such success would attend their efforts as would warrant them in continuing the movement year after year." "Pull for the shore," was then sung as a solo, the choir and congregation joining in the chorus. Appropriate remarks were made by Rev. Thomas Crowther, and after singing and prayer the audience was dismissed with the benediction.

July 23d.—After the usual opening exercises, Rev. George E. Reed, of the Hanson Place M. E. Church, spoke from 1 Kings, xx., 39, 40, and especially on these words, "Keep this man, if by any means he be missing." He maintained that over and above the work which Christians must perform in common with other people, God had placed human beings somewhat under their charge, and Christians are understood to have a corresponding responsibility. Multitudes of men might be called "missing" men—they have been missing from the house of God, from the prayer circle of Christian homes, and from all good influence. Christians should, in a measure, hold themselves responsible for these missing men.

An address was also delivered by Rev. Joseph Wild, D. D.

August 6th.—The service of last Sabbath was omitted on account of the severe storm, but during the week an entirely new and water-proof tent was secured, and a bright day attracted a very large attendance. At least fifteen hundred people were present.

The opening address was delivered by Rev. I. W. Hathaway. He spoke of the necessity and work of the Young Men's Christian Association, and also impressed on the audience the necessity of the observance of the Sabbath. Their old Puritan Sabbath was already gone in spirit. They had got to recapture it. This young Americanism, which would say that Sabbath observance was unnecessary, was an old Satanism.

The choir and congregation sang "Hold the Fort," after which Rev. Mr. Noyes, of Baltimore, delivered an excellent address on "Saving Souls." He said it was the grandest employment the Christian could engage in. He remarked on how little it was appreciated in the church and in the family, in the worship and in the social circle. Christians will speak on almost any subject, but when it comes to talking about the soul they have nothing to say. Soul-saving was the Master's business, and the disciple should follow in His footsteps.

August 13th.—A marked growth of interest in these services was evident from increased attendance. After the preliminary service of song, the Rev. David Inglis, of the Reformed Church on the Heights, was introduced, and took for his text Isa. lv., 1: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." His sermon, which was a model of clear exposition, and warm and glowing exhortation, is reported in this book.

August 20th.—The attendance on this day exceeded any previous service, about two thousand people being present. Camp stools in the aisles were provided to increase the seating capacity.

The preacher of the occasion was Rev. Dr. Alexander Reed, formerly a Brooklyn pastor, just returned from a twelve months' absence in Europe. He selected Matt. iv., 10, as his text: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." The discourse, which was for the most part devoted to a showing up of the weakness of the objections brought against God and revealed religion by infidels and skeptics, was highly instructive and useful to the Christian who in his every-day life comes in contact with scoffers and cavillers. In the course of his argument he showed that there is a God who was the Creater of the world; who revealed Himelf to man in the Bible, and to whom man is responsible. Among the common objections replied to was the assertion that religion makes people melancholy. Christians are never melancholy on their own account, but melancholy because their relatives and friends, and the world around them, are so insane as to continue rejecting Christ and the vast and eternal privileges which an acceptance of Him implies.

August 27th.—Every seat on the platform and main floor was

occupied. Hundreds obtained standing room around the doorways, while many could not get within hearing distance. The services were very impressive. Prof. Loos, of Bethany College, West Virginia, read the narrative of the conversion of the eunuch through Philip (Acts viii, 8), and preached a plain and powerful gospel sermon.

September 3d.—The interest and attendance were fully equal to the previous Sabbath. The preacher of the day was Rev. Joseph T. Duryea, D.D. His discourse was very earnest and effective. Its theme was the yearning of God for the return of the lost and wandering sinner. In simple words and with clear-cut thought he illustrated and pressed home to the minds of his hearers the infinite compassion and love of the Heavenly Father. To elucidate the truth that God is far more anxious that sinners should turn to Him than sinners are to accept His mercy, he reviewed the three parables in Luke xv,— of the lost silver, the lost sheep, and, as it should be termed, the lost son. In each of these parables God is represented as seeking the lost sinner. The piece of silver was inanimate, had no emotions, did not desire to be saved. Here in the strongest light we see the exceeding solicitude of God to save the sinner, even when the object of that solicitude has no corresponding desire whatever. A sheep has a certain amount of intelligence. The one in the parable knew its lost condition, and wanted to return to the fold. Yet how helpless! A farmer once said he knew in what a sad plight it was in, "for a sheep is the worst critter to find its way home." No doubt that was why it was chosen for this illustration instead of the horse or the ox. The sheep was lost. Yet it did all it could. It bleated to signify its distress. And if the sinner will only signify his desire to return to God, God will rejoice to save him. In this parable, also, we see the brooding care of the Almighty, and His surpassing anxiety to rescue the erring. The same anxiety is apparent in the parable of the lost son. Sure, the father allows the son to wallow a while in iniquity, but it is to bring him to his senses, and as soon as misery brings the son to repentance, the father rushes out to meet him on the way. If that father had sent a constable after his son and brought him home by force, his return would not have been because he was heart-sick of sin. So God has to teach sinners a lesson, and let them become weary of their ways. As soon as they do, He will meet them more than halfway. The first sign of sorrow for sin, the first throb of love to Him in a penitent's breath is a source of new joy—wonderful thought—to the great God of heaven.

September 10th.—Fifteen hundred people were present, and an interesting sermon, on "Cause and Effect," was preached by Rev. Emory J. Haynes, showing how good and evil both reproduce

and multiply themselves, and impressing the importance of right thinking and right-living.

T. DeWitt Talmage, D.D., was expected to preach on the 17th of September, but the equinoctial storm was so severe that no service could be held. One of the committee who waited on the preacher for the day was greeted with the salutation, "The Lord *reigns*," and in announcing the service on the next Sabbath morning he remarked, half humorously and half in earnest, that "the prince of the power of the air" was not favorable to such meetings, which was more appropriate than he knew, as Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D., who had promised to preach, had already sent word that the day was unsuitable for out-door services. Although again disappointed in the day, about two hundred and fifty persons, who had assembled, held a most delightful prayer-meeting under the leadership of a city missionary. We anticipated the continuance of services during the autumn, and expected that Rev. Dr. Storrs, Rev. Dr. Tyng and others would officiate on successive Sabbaths. But in view of the coolness of the weather for out-door meetings, the executive committee decided to hold a closing service in the Y. M. C. A. hall on October 1st. There were over a thousand persons present, and after the singing by the choir, a delightful sermon was preached by Rev. S. H. Tyng, jr., D.D., from the words in Jno. xx., 20: "He showed unto them His hands and His side."

In addition to the Sabbath services at half past four o'clock, regular services have been held since the first week in August, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at eight o'clock, and the Christian Union of Temperance Women have also held a meeting on Wednesday evenings. The regular week-evening services have been conducted by city pastors, and consisted of a short sermon and a prayer-meeting. In regard to our methods of work, the committee have unanimously recognized the necessity of a called and qualified ministry in all evangelistic labors, and other Christian workers have willingly co-operated as helpers in the evening prayer-meetings and the affairs of practical administration. Another feature of all our services has been the marked absence of excitement. Believing that the truths of the gospel, brought home to the heart by the Holy Spirit, are perfectly adapted and divinely appointed as the one and only agency of man's redemption from sin and renewal in the Divine image, we have endeavored to have these great and blessed truths preached with purity and plainness, pertinence and power, committing the results to God, and relying on the immutable promise, "My Word shall not return unto me void."

But although the seed has thus been sown, leaving its quickening and growth to heavenly influences, we have rejoiced in

some immediate fruits. One most striking instance is that of a young man, a professed Christian and teacher in Sabbath school, who had long walked in secret darkness and doubt, who has now learned the way of faith in Christ more perfectly, and entered into the full joy of the reconciliation. Another noteworthy case is that of a sorrowful one who was greatly comforted at an evening meeting through a conversation with the minister who conducted it. But we forbear. So many apparent results are not real, and so many more real results are not apparent, that we can never rightly estimate the influence of spiritual work. No doubt, among the multitudes who have listened to the gospel message at these services, many careless ones have been awakened, many penitents have rejoiced in new-found pardon, many wanderers have been reclaimed, many sad hearts have been consoled. No doubt, there has been here a spiritual realization of that beautiful tradition connected with the fountain on the road-side from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, which relates that as the wise men of the East walked along, wearied and saddened because they had lost sight of their guiding star, stooping down to drink they beheld reflected on its clear water the heavenly light, and at once went on their way rejoicing, and were soon bowing and worshipping before the infant Redeemer. No doubt, it will be found on the great day, when the secrets of all hearts are revealed, that many have here seen the "bright morning star," and followed its leadings unto life everlasting.

We hope that another year Gospel Tents may be erected in every large city. Experience proves that it is "casting the net on the right side of the ship." Many who have not been to church for months and years have, in this way, heard the glad tidings of salvation. The novelty, freedom and comfort of these services will always attract a multitude. It is one of the signs of a true Christianity, as it was of old of the true Christ, "The poor have the gospel preached unto them."

CHAPTER XXX.

FREE SALVATION.

SERMON BY THE REV. DAVID INGLIS, D.D., OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH, BROOKLYN, ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 13, 1876.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."—*Isa. lv.*, 2.

In the preceding chapters of this book, the prophet has foretold the coming of the Prince of Peace, and has clearly indicated His office as a Prophet, who should proclaim salvation to the lost, and as a King, to whom the kings of the earth were to do homage. It is not till we come to the fifty-third chapter that we have the great mystery unfolded of the three-fold office in the effulgence of His glory as the sinner's Saviour. In that chapter, He is presented to us as the Priest—and not only as the Priest but as the sacrifice; He was to offer HIMSELF without spot to God. He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows—the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all; He poured out His soul unto death; He was numbered with the transgressors; He bore the sins of many; He made intercession for the transgressors. Yet even this chapter, which thus foreshadows the humiliation of Jesus Christ in its lowest depths, brightens into a proclamation of the triumph which should follow, announcing that He should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Out of the depths of humiliation, the height of glory was to come; joy out of the suffering, life out of the death. Next, the prophet addresses the church, which was then in a depressed and afflicted condition, and tells her of the blessedness that was to result from the great atonement, admonishing to enlarge the place of her tent, and stretch forth her curtain and

lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes to make room for the great ingatherings of all nations, kindreds and tongues. The church's security and blessedness are exhibited, and then suddenly we hear this cry, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money—come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Does it not seem as though the prophet had taken his stand in faith's ramparts or on one of her high towers, where, looking on the one hand, he saw the city of the great King, with all its security, its peace, its plenty, its fullness of blessing; while on the other hand, he saw the great wilderness, in which were multitudes of men, women and children, perishing beneath the burning rays of the sun from which they can find no shelter, perishing of hunger, dying of thirst. And the sight is all the more pitiful because of the many delusions by which they are cheated. Here are some who fancy they see a pool of water gleaming in the sunshine. They eagerly rush towards it, only to find it a mirage—a delusion—there is nothing there but the burning sand. Others eagerly seek some bush, hoping to find some fruit, or at least, some shelter there, but it's both fruitless and leafless; they sink down in bitter disappointment and give up all hope. Is not this a true picture of those who in this life are Christless, exposed to the wrath of God against sin, seeking soul satisfaction where it cannot be found, and dying hopelessly at last? And all the while the gates stand wide open day and night; there is here all that the soul needs. Nerved with pity and care, passion and love, the voice of gospel invitation cries, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

There is something peculiarly touching in the invitations of the Word of God, which, if men would but pause and reflect, could not fail to make an impression upon their hearts. Just look for a little at this one, and say if you can resist.

I. CONSIDER THE FIGURES UNDER WHICH THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL ARE HERE SET FORTH. The thirsty are invited to come and drink—*there is water.* The hungry are invited to come and eat—*there is bread, nay, there is milk too for the babes.* The weak and sad are invited to come for that which will cheer and invigorate—*there is wine.* First, then, of the water for the thirsty. To the traveler in the desert whose supplies of food and water have failed, the first great necessity is water. The sense of thirst swallows up the sensation of hunger. To such a man water is life. You may offer him all the gold he ever dreamt of, you may present him with the title deeds to an empire, but they are worthless; his cry is "Give me water or I die!" So the invitation of the gospel speaks to us as children of want. Nor is this in its application to sinners to be confined to those who are

conscious of their spiritual wants—to awakened souls. *Thirst*—the word sweeps the whole circle of humanity—every man thirsts. Men are subject to desires for which nature has no provision, which the most brilliant success in life, the most varied sources of pleasure, the most refined cultivation in nature, with all the charms of literature, art, and science, fail to satisfy. The feeling of want may be very vague and undefined, but there is a thirst of the soul in every man which only the gospel can quench. Water has been the familiar symbol of the redemption provided by Jesus Christ, from the earliest ages. This salvation was symbolized by the stream that gushed from the smitten rock in Horeb. David, in the Psalms, has taught the church in all ages, to sing "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." On the last day of the great Jewish feast of tabernacles, it was the custom of the worshippers to repair in a body to the pool of Siloam, where the priests, having drawn of the waters which flowed by the side of the rock on which the temple stood, they bore it, with every demonstration of joy, to the temple, and poured it upon the altar. It was the memorial of the smitten rock which ran in the desert like a stream; and our Lord lifting up His voice, cried, "If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink." It was in effect, saying, I am the smitten rock of which your fathers drank; I am the fountain of living waters; I can satisfy every thirsty soul. Yet, again, after Jesus had ascended on high, ere He closed up the written revelation, He sent one closing invitation to poor sinners, saying, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." The import of all this is that Christ presents Himself to us, again and again, under this figure as satisfying the deepest, most pressing desires of the human soul, can relieve man's thirst and refresh him with immortal vigor, In the atoning sacrifice of Christ there is that which meets your guilt as sinners, and secures free and full forgiveness; in the promised gift of the Spirit there is that which meets your impurity and secures the renewal of the soul. Here is the only water which can quench your soul-thirst. This to you is life or death. Refuse it and you perish; take it, and it will be in you a well of living water springing up to everlasting life.

Then there is bread as well as water, for we are exhorted to come and eat; nay, more, that the wants of the youngest may be met, *there is milk for babes.* Travelers tell us that when the thirst has been allayed the sensation of hunger returns. So there is the sense of spiritual hunger which succeeds the allaying of spiritual thirst. There is danger of the soul dying of hunger. Here, then, is milk for babes in Christ, and bread of heaven for

the hungry. We know that the milk is the Word, the bread is simply a symbol for the doctrines and promises that centre in Christ crucified. What is wanted is never simply knowledge of the truths of the Bible, but *experimental knowledge*—the Word read, and meditated, and received into the heart by faith. A man may look on a well-spread table, admire and admire its full provisions, but it will not feed him unless he eat thereof. A man may be able to explain the different articles of food, and to expatiate on their excellent qualities, but if he is to be strengthened thereby he must himself partake. So a man may admire the doctrines of grace—he may even be able to expound and defend them—but he will not be built up in faith and holiness unless he receives them into his own soul by faith. Dear friends, you must not only be students of the Bible, you must study your Bibles on your knees. Humble men have learned more of Divine truth on their knees than great scholars with all their application.

Again, there is not only water, and bread, and milk. *There is wine.* There is not only nourishment, there is joy and refreshment. Wine is sometimes used in scripture in a sense which leads the sacred writers to condemn its use; at other times it is used in a good sense; and in this last case it is always the symbol of joy—"Wine which maketh glad the heart of man." The supply of nature craving for water and food is not all of man's wants. Bare life—mere existence—is not all of a true human life. It is for happiness he desires to live. To be satisfied with mere life and the gratification of the bodily appetites is brutal. The gospel offers you wine, joy, blessedness. There is no real abiding blessedness except in the gospel. The joy of the worldly man is like the shallow pool in the early spring, which presents to the eye all the appearance of a fine sheet of water, but as the season advances the heat of the sun dries it up, and there is nothing there but the hard baked earth. The joy of the Christian is like the ocean, full many a fathom deep; it is never dried up. In times of deepest sorrow, when all earthly comforts and helpers fail, the Christian joy flows on, because it has its spring in the ascended Saviour, beyond the reach of change or changes. We, as Christians, do sometimes bear false witness for Christ—we seem sad and downcast, as if we had no God, no Jesus Christ, no Holy Ghost, no heaven; but every believer is bound to justify his faith in Christ by a life of blessedness and love—to show that it is a reality, and that the gospel is a power of good to himself and others. In inviting you to take of these blessings of the gospel, we offer you the new wine of the kingdom—the joy of the Holy Ghost—an ever-flowing fountain of holy beauty, and holy joy, and holy strength.

II.—The manner and nature of the invitation.—Here the first thing is *its earnestness*, as expressed by the word "Ho." It is as though one in a company of desert travelers had been able to press on ahead of his companions, and had suddenly come upon a spring of water in the wilderness. He quenches his own thirst, he bathes his burning brow in the cooling stream, and then he thinks of the companions who are perishing for thirst, and hastens to tell them of the water he has found. And how does he do this? Does he stand by the flowing water, and in a tone of carelessness say, "Here is water; come and take it if you will?" Perish the thought. His own soul stirred by gratitude for his deliverance, and by joy in the refreshment and vigor that have come to him, and moved with pity for those who are ready to perish, all the more tender because but a few minutes before he was as they are, he lifts up his voice, he cries aloud, so that the most distant may hear, so that if any have sank into lethargy they may be aroused, so he cries, "Ho! Ho! Ye thirsty ones, come to the waters." So we, whether as ministers, or parents, or Sabbath-school teachers, or in the still more private ministrations of friend with friend, must tell to others of the Saviour we have found, with earnestness and power; not as though we were repeating a thrice told tale, but as delivering a message that is as urgent as it is blessed. Let the sinner's need of salvation waken all your concern and let gratitude to God for your own salvation nerve you to all earnestness.

The next point is *its universality*. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come." Yes; but you say, it is only for those who thirst; and I am not conscious of that thirst. It is only for the awakened, and I am not awakened. It has already been explained, that the thirst here spoken of is that universal sense of want of which every soul is conscious. Look for a moment at the next verse, and mark how the prophet expostulates with those who are obviously unawakened, and you will see that this invitation is universal and comprehensive. To the sinner as such, the invitation belongs. It is not only universal, it is also distinctly *individual and minute*. It is not "Ho, all that thirst," but "Ho, *every one* that thirsteth." Everyone comprehends the individual; you must not lose yourself in the crowd. God's Spirit is taking you apart, and dealing with you one by one, pressing home upon you your guilt and danger as a sinner, and inviting you personally to take of this salvation.

III—It is free.—It is unhampered by any condition or qualification. You may here call my attention to the fact that the invitation is "come and buy." What then must we bring in our hand wherewith to pay for this salvation? Notice yet again, that those who are invited to come are those who have no money, and

that you are invited to buy "without money and without price." This is not the way in which men do their business. They invite those who have money, those whose credit is good to come and purchase of them. They insist on the money for value received. But here those who are invited to buy are the poor, the bankrupt, and the terms on which they are to buy are without money, without price of any kind. Strange paradox! What is the meaning? It means not simply that you may have it without money and without price, but that you cannot have it on any other terms. You must come as poor and needy, bringing no price in your hand; giving up all confidence in your own righteousness, your promises of amendment, your vows, your penances, your prayers, and take salvation as a free gift. It has been bought; Jesus paid for it all long, long ago. As for you, it may be that your self-righteousness is even now your great hindrance. Oh, that God would show you your own sin as He sees it, and then you would be willing to take this salvation as it is freely offered you in the gospel. In the name of Christ, I invite every man, woman and child who hears me, to take Jesus as their Saviour, and to rejoice in Him as truly as if Jesus came to each of them, and taking him or her by the hand, said, "I am thy Saviour, wilt thou have me?"

CHAPTER XXXI.

GLAD TIDINGS BY YOUNG SOLDIERS.

THE SUMMER REVIVAL UNDER CANVAS CONDUCTED BY YOUNG MEN, MEMBERS OF THE REV. DR. T. DE WITT TALMAGE'S CHURCH, BROOKLYN.

On Sunday evening, June 4th, 1876, three young men, members of Dr. Talmage's congregation, started home together through a heavy rain-storm. On the way the conversation turned on active Christian work. Stopping under an awning, Mr. George S. Mersereau, one of the three, told of work at Avon Springs, N. Y., which had been richly blessed, and his companions, fired by the story, wished for a like opportunity. It was suggested by Mr. Mersereau that Prospect Park, Brooklyn, was a good field. The next day Mr. Griffith applied to Mr. John Y. Culyer for a permit to use the music stand and grounds. He seemed favorably disposed, but said President Stranahan would have to be seen, and an appointment was made for noon of the next day. Mr. Stranahan was visited, when he courteously but firmly refused the permit, giving as reasons the refusing of similar privileges to the Y. M. C. A., young Bible readers, and tract distributors; the desire to avoid all sectarian agitation, and the clamor of politicians.

Private ground at the junction of Eighth and Flatbush Avenues was then secured, and in two weeks from its inception Brooklyn's First Gospel Tent crowned the green, breezy slope near the great fountain, the red cross of the Master floating proudly over it. The tent was 80 by 40 feet, with a capacity of about 1,000. The legend,

GOSPEL TENT.
JESUS INVITES YOU NEAR.

on a large strip of canvas faced the thoroughfare; and many energetic and consecrated Christian laymen co-operated zealously in the new work.

The first service was a most gratifying success. Printed slips, containing several of the well-known hymns from Mr. Sankey's collection, were distributed among the audience, and after a half hour's preliminary singing, led by Mr. Robert Edwards on the organ (generously furnished, free of cost, by Mr. Horace Waters, the manufacturer), the services opened with a prayer by Mr. H. R. Ford, of New York, that God would send His Holy Spirit to bless in the conversion of souls. Messrs. Wm. Hammond, Cogswell, Garford, Waters and Edwards followed with brief, fervent appeals, the last named telling the story of his own conversion in a simple, pathetic manner. Bred a sailor, and leading a life of drunkenness and hopeless sin, he, with two boon companions, was passing a downtown mission-room, when hearing some singing, and music being a passion with him, he, much to the disgust and annoyance of his chums, resolved on going in. The speaker was exhorting his hearers to flee the wrath to come, and depicted the sad estate of the sinner so faithfully that it made a great impression on the mind of the sailor. A few evenings after, on his way to the Atlantic Beer Garden with some companions, he again passed the mission and was impelled to go in. The rear seats were filled, and ere he knew it he found himself seated down on the front seat, within arm's reach of the preacher, a post of honor he was far from coveting. The preacher seemed to talk directly to him, and at the conclusion of his address left the platform and knelt down by him and prayed. Then touching the astounded Edwards lightly with his elbow he said, "Pray, brother." No convenient chasm opening in the floor, the perspiring sailor remained silent on his knees, where he had dropped because it seemed the fashion there, until a second and vigorous dig in the ribs from the annoying elbow sent him into a tremor. "Pray, brother," came again the importunate whisper; a third and very vigorous shock from the preacher's elbow brought from the sinful sailor's trembling lips the briefest and most effective prayer he ever uttered, "Lord have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner!"—a prayer that brought him a speedy answer.

An inquiry-meeting was held at the conclusion of the tent service, at which there were many anxious souls and a blessed arousal.

The Moody and Sankey collection of gospel hymns was there-

after adopted, a large number of the smaller books being purchased and distributed. Of the second service the New York *Witness* said:—

"At 4.30 yesterday afternoon the Brooklyn tent, situated on the Flatbush Avenue entrance to Prospect Park, was opened for the second Sabbath service. The structure is able to hold about 1,000 people, but has not as yet seating accommodation for more than half that number. The inclosure was very airy and cool, so that there was nothing, from a physical point of view, which could possibly detract from the value of the spiritual treat afforded. Several well-known hymns from the Sankey collection were sung during the first twenty minutes, after which the regular service was begun by the singing of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." Mr. B. M. Smith offered the opening prayer.

"Mr. Ide built his brief discourse on the interview between Paul and King Agrippa, especially on the words of the latter—'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.' In his general remarks he said that he had often spoken before in a tent, but never in a Gospel Tent. This was the sort of work in which Christian young men should be engaged. Their business companions might say they were crazy, as they did when the Greene street prayer-meeting was started. In that place a glorious work was done in the saving of souls, and they expected a similar, or, perhaps, greater blessing as the result of their labors here. The salvation of souls was no crazy undertaking, but was, on the contrary, a work of philanthropy and wisdom.

"Mr. Edwards sang 'Almost Persuaded' as a solo. This gentleman is a talented vocalist, and a perfect master of the instrument. Being a Swede by birth, his pronunciation of the words is a little faulty. He has, however, overcome this difficulty to a great extent within the past few months.

"In response to Mr. Ide's call seven arose for prayer, who were remembered at the throne of grace by Messrs. Horace Waters, Reeves and Edwards. At the close of the exercises twenty persons remained to converse with the brethren."

The third meeting was, in every way, as encouraging as the first and second. With a large congregation, and a plain, earnest speaker, in the person of Mr. B. F. Cogswell, nothing was wanting to make the service a success but the Spirit of God, and that was abundantly manifest in the many anxious enquirers at the close.

The New York *Herald* of the succeeding Sunday, contained this record:

"The Brooklyn Gospel Tent has proved a decided success. The audiences of the better classes are larger and the interest is intensifying. Thirteen inquirers rose at the initial meeting, nine-

teen at the second. To-day there will be a praise meeting at half-past four P. M. The young laymen at the head of the movement have formed an association, with B. F. Cogswell, President; G. S. Mersereau, Treasurer; W. P. Griffith, Secretary. Like Moody, they abhor debt and have thus far avoided it.

"This evening the Tabernacle Lay College will begin supplementary meetings in the same tent at eight o'clock. The Young Men's Christian Association begin their tent services next Sunday, having selected ground a few blocks south of the Brooklyn Gospel Tent."

The Lay College Preaching Association, President Eli Sheppard in the van, as usual, went energetically into service. There was no lack of speakers or of interest, and the Holy Spirit was manifest in continuous conversions, God was glorified and Christ's standard advanced in all these services.

There were but two rainy Sundays during the course of 14 weeks, the first on July 23d, the second, the final Sunday, September 17th. Of the former the *Witness* reported·

"There was preaching under difficulties yesterday afternoon in the Gospel Tent, Flatbush and Eighth avenues, Brooklyn. In consequence of the constant downpour of the rain there was no service held in the large tent under the control of the Y. M. C. A. It was at first contemplated to dismiss the small congregation who had assembled in the smaller tent, but Mr. W. P. Griffith, who takes a deep interest in the work, was on hand and resolved to inaugurate a service. He addressed the meeting at some length, after which the 11th hymn, "I have a Saviour; He's pleading in glory," was sung. The leader then invited any of the brethren who felt so disposed to say a few words.

"Mr. J. H. Barron responded by rising in his place and delivering a solemn address on the uncertainty of life, urging on all the necessity of accepting Christ as a fitting preparation for death. Brother Barron then offered prayer.

"The meeting was closed with the doxology. It may be remarked that, notwithstanding the disagreeable weather and the apparent lack of preparation on the part of the speakers, the service was a highly interesting one, and was evidently blessed to the edification of those present."

(Of the latter storm it is sufficient to say here that every indication being equinoctial, the tent was struck early in the morning, and put away, the weather having become so inclement that further services were considered injurious sanitarily.)

And now came the time for closing the tent services, two months being the period for which the meetings had been planned. The services of that day and the action taken are best told in the *Witness'* report;

"At the Gospel Tent, corner of Eighth and Flatbush avenues, the services were under the conduct of Mr. Wm. Hammond. There was a larger audience than for some weeks. After the preliminary exercises Mr. Hammond read the two concluding verses of the fourth chapter of Second Corinthians, taking for the keynote of the service that "the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." He alluded to men of colossal fortunes, like Stewart and Vanderbilt, who found wealth not all of life. The winds will sigh over their graves the same as over the poor man's. Mr. Reeves spoke of the classes of perishing we need to rescue. O. W. Garford and Mr. Hadden then spoke, the latter alluding to the work at the Raymond Street Jail.

"Mr. G. S. Mersereau then stated that the time—two months—for which the meetings were set, had now terminated, and as there was a great desire expressed for an extension, there would be a vote taken. A rising vote proved almost unanimous, financial help was guaranteed, and it was decided to continue the services to the first of September.

"The evening service, under the auspices of the Tabernacle Lay Preaching Association, and led by Mr. W. Hamilton, was largely attended. The singing was led by Mr. E. P. Ide, and was joined in with much vigor. The theme of the evening was the query: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" and upon it the several speakers, students of the Lay College, based a number of earnest addresses. They were attentively listened to, and the entire audience remained for a short season of prayer after the regular proceedings. The meeting was in general one of the most encouraging of the series."

The ninth Sunday's services were led by G. S. Mersereau in the afternoon, and by W. P. Griffith in the evening. According to the *Witness'* report, at the former service the barren fig tree was the theme. The leader told of a friend met on the ferry-boat on his way to the theatre, who in conversation confessed that his life had been unsatisfactory to himself, and said he would like to be a Christian. He represented the fruitless tree. Mr. Griffith dwelt upon the thought that Christ expected us all to be fruitful. Appeals for earnest seekers to rise for prayers were answered at both services, and the interest was kept up even after their close. The evening meeting was of an informal character, and earnest addresses were made by a number of Christian workers present with visible effect. The tent was crowded, and the attention marked throughout.

The only collection taken up at any of the services was taken up in the evening, and the system was dropped for good.

The tenth Sunday's services—leader, Wm. Peck Smith—were by all odds the best of the series, in the number of souls saved, and the vigor and spirit of the addresses. The tent was thronged, and crowds surrounded the door unable to gain admission. The feature of the day was an address by Dr. M. L. Rossvally, the converted Jew, who thought salvation vital, though many did not accept Christ so readily as he had. Seven months ago, after forty years of blasphemy, of disbelief, and of drunkenness and vice, he found Christ. The doctor told of a young man who, when approached, threw his hat in his face; didn't want a Jew to ask him if he was a Christian. He and his sister were now happy in Christ. It took twelve nights to finish the work.

The evening service was in every way successful. The tent was crowded, and the proceedings of an animated and interesting order. Mr. J. H. Little presided, and addresses were made by a number of Lay College students on the theme, "The wages of sin is death." An after prayer-meeting was held, to which a large portion of the audience remained, and earnest supplication was offered for a present penitent and for other cases in whose behalf prayer was asked.

The next Sunday's services were most interesting and largely attended. O. W. Garford conducted the service. The sin of unbelief and the rewards of belief were the chief topics. An inquiry meeting was held after the service, with the best results. The evening service was one of the best yet held. The tent was well filled, and as many more stood outside, listening very attentively. The service was conducted by Mr. Eli Sheppard, president of the Lay College Preaching Association.

The inquiry room meeting at the close was well attended, many of the Christian workers speaking.

A Sabbath school was next organized; a large movable blackboard was procured, the children of the adjacent Home for the Destitute were invited and came, and thence until the final service, there was held in this tent one of the best organized and most orderly Sabbath schools of which the City of Churches could boast, Messrs. Hadden and Waters superintending, and Mr. and Mrs. Bronson helping most effectively. The following is the *Witness*' report of the succeeding Sunday's services:—

"At the Young Men's Gospel Tent, there was an audience that overflowed the tent and thronged about the doors. Messrs. Hancock and Garford made brief and very effective addresses, the former preferring to speak of Jesus' love, but telling eloquently of the Christian's anticipations.

"Mr. Peck Smith spoke of a visit to Prospect Park, and of seeing barrels of liquors dispensed to the everlasting ruin of some, while the Park Commissioners had refused to the young men of

this tent the right to preach the gospel there. An inquiry meeting was held afterward, which was blessed to a great many souls.

"The evening service was well attended. Mr. W. Bryant presided. A number of earnest addresses were made upon the theme: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The importance of at once accepting salvation was faithfully presented and emphasized. An after prayer-meeting was held, to which many remained."

Then came what proved the final service, as reported in the *Argus*.

"At the Young Men's Tent facing on Flatbush avenue, the services yesterday afternoon were conducted by Mr. W. P. Griffith, of the New York *World*. After the usual introductory exercises, that gentleman delivered a sermon based on the first half of the 55th chapter of Isaiah. He stated that he intended to discuss the question, "Who may come to Christ?" In commencing, he claimed that man must come with all his heart and all his soul and give up all things. The speaker then referred to his own experience, telling of the peculiar temptations under which he labored, and stating that as soon as he made up his mind to give up everything for Christ, he gained peace.

"Mr. W. C. Hadden told of a young man who had been converted in Raymond street jail and who was now in the South working for Christ. It was possible to work for the Saviour under all circumstances and in every place.

"After a few remarks by Mr. Peck Smith, the meeting was dismissed with the benediction."

The enterprise steadily grew in magnitude and power from the first. The trio whose first ambition it was to address a hastily gathered crowd, extempore, with a dry-goods box or huge stone for a platform, and the green sward for an auditorium, found themselves graciously lifted out of obscurity, and given help at every time of need, and with thousands for audiences where they had hardly dared hope for hundreds. Adapting the Cromwellian maxim to their own case, the key-note of their success was, earnest work for Christ, and unfaltering trust in the Omnipotent. Immediately upon the close of the tent services the young men were offered free use of Liberty Hall, corner of Gates and Nostrand avenues, in which to continue the meetings, and though their arduous summer campaign might seem to warrant a rest, they made arrangements and on Sunday, October 2d, began a series of evangelistic services which bid fair to bear rich fruit for the Master.

The harvest is ready for the sickle, in New York, in Brooklyn, in all quarters of God's universe; the Lord of the harvest promises us that the precious seed of the Word once sown shall not

return to Him void, and all our experience attests the truth that though

> Sown in the darkness or sown in the light,
> Sown in our weakness or sown in our might,
> Gathered in time or eternity,
> Sure, ah, sure, will the harvest be.

THE INQUIRY ROOM WORK.

We give our readers a few items of this important part of all evangelistic labor, and prefer that the particulars as furnished to us speak in their own words.

Soon after the services began, young N———, passing on his way to the Park, stopped. He was invited and came in, became interested, and helped us very much physically. I asked him if he was a Christian; "No;" "Why aren't you?" "Well, I don't know." I prayed for him very earnestly, in secret and publicly, and got others to do so. At the conclusion of one of our arousing meetings, as I glanced round the tent, I was delighted to see modest young N———, not caring who saw him, right out upon the platform, on his knees, praying as if his life depended on it. Last Communion Sabbath, I was blessed by having him beside me, at the Master's table.

At the first service, I was stationed at the tent entrance to invite passers-by to enter. I saw what appeared to be a family-party on their way to the Park. I stepped out as they paused, and persuaded them to come in. They attended regularly thereafter, bringing many others with them—mostly their countrymen —Swedes. I would not like to say how many were converted. I know of several, and all were greatly blessed.

Two young men came, through curiosity; were deeply affected by the addresses, some of the speakers being young men known to them, but at the conclusion started down town. M—'s attention was called to them. He went after them, though they had gone some distance, and persuaded them to come back for a talk. Before they left, one resolved to come out on the Lord's side, and within a week, the other followed his comrade.

Young M——— stood at the door of the tent, a well-dressed, manly-looking fellow. He reluctantly entered and would not sit down. When anxious souls were requested to rise or hold up their hands, a great many responded, among others M———. I walked right over and warmly grasped his hand. He wanted to procrastinate. With my own eyes full of tears and my voice husky with glad emotions, I besought him to finish the work then.

Finally, he consented to go forward. W——— was talking very earnestly to the inquirers, and in a few minutes we all got down upon our knees and engaged in prayer. A solemn moment or two elapsed, and then M——— broke out into an earnest supplication for himself.

A sweet-faced Catholic young lady, wanted to "get nearer to Jesus." Her desire was gratified, after several visits to the tent and to other meetings at the Lay College.

While walking round the tent one dark night, I stumbled over a man lying prone upon the earth, with his head by an opening in the canvas, drinking in all that was said. He proved to be a veritable prodigal, and if not feeding on husks, at least the next thing to them. He refused to come inside, because of his rags, but finally came. A subscription was taken up, to provide him with food, shelter and clothes, and the poor fellow was sent on his way rejoicing, with the glad tidings of the gospel ringing in his ears! God grant it was a *soul cure* as well as a body cure.

Here is a story of conversion told at one of the meetings. The speaker had been a very wild young man, skeptical and derisive in religious discussions. One day, a white-haired old gentleman, one of our best workers, after hearing a violent tirade against Christianity from R——— , put his arm about him, and said, "I love you; Christ loves you more than I do. I'm going to pray for you between 11 and 12 o'clock to-night." The remark rang in his ears all day and night. He found no rest or peace till that prayer was answered in his conversion.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WINDOWS OF THE WORD

FOR

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D., IN THE GOSPEL TENT, ON MONDAY, JUNE 19TH, 1876, ON THE USE OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHING, AND HOW TO MAKE SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATE ITSELF.

Fellow Sunday-school teachers:

Our office is not fulfilled when we have led children to Christ. Doubtless that is the first and should ever be made the most prominent object of our instruction. But when the little ones have learned to trust their salvation and their strength to Jesus, they still remain under our guidance, and the Sunday-school class becomes the training class in the new life. It seems to me often that this relation of the Sunday-school teacher is held in abeyance, and that the full power of the class is not manifested as it should be. If you will recognize your calling to be the parallel of the pastor, not simply in the ingathering but in the upbuilding of souls, you will have the idea that I wish to communicate at the opening. This being understood, our office as Sunday-school teacher has to do with the whole nature of the child confided to our care, and especially with that mental nature by which they are to apprehend the truth and be built up in their most holy faith. We are not simply to communicate lessons which may be held by a memory, sensitive, retentive and ready for use; we are not simply to open up the passages of God's word and analyze them, so that the child may at the moment receive the truth; but we are so to educate that little mind confided to our training that it shall be able in all after life to study for itself. It is a great

thing in a family when a child begins to feed itself; when the nurse is dismissed from the high chair, and the bib taken from the front of the child, and the fork succeeds the spoon. And it is a great thing for a Sunday-school teacher to bring a child, by a process of training, into such a use of its own faculties that it may feed itself upon the Word of God.

One of the most important faculties of the human mind, to be used in the study of God's Word, is the imagination; and yet the value of that power is terribly depreciated among us. The sentimental trash which is supposed to appeal to the imagination has succeeded in demeaning the reputation of the imagination itself; and to say that a person is imaginative is almost tantamount to saying he lies. He has an undue and distorted use of a faculty upon which God has placed the greatest honor, and which is second to no other faculty of the human mind, in the study of God's Word. What can you understand of the marvelous imagery of the book of Daniel; or of the wonderful prophecies of the book of Ezekiel? How can you know the appearance of that glorious One who walketh still in the midst of the golden candlesticks? How can you conceive of the judgment day, when all shall stand before the great white throne, and be called upon to give an account of the deeds done in the flesh, unless imagination have its place in the comprehension of the Word of God? It is vital in the understanding of the revelation of God.

All illustration is only an appeal to the imagination, for the imagination is that faculty which perceives the inner truth of things that are seen. It stands before a little violet, and sees humility in its growth. It looks up to yon glorious sun, and sees majesty in its sphere. Every sensible object has in itself the germs of things which are abstract and spiritual. When we have therefore to teach children so much that cannot be seen, the best way in which to do it, is to lead them up to the truth through things that do appear, or things that appeal to their fancy. Children are very crude in their imagination. This is evinced by their habit of exaggeration. I know a boy, who, whenever he has seen one cat in the garden, comes in and says he has seen ten thousand cats. His imagination has generalized on that one cat to a terrible extent. Crudity of the power is evinced by that one expression. And yet every one of our teachers understands perfectly that the education of that faculty is what is aimed at, so that they may get above the forms and pictures presented to them, and seize upon the truths of God's word. I know not what is the use of object lessons in the Sunday-school work, unless it be the training of imagination in the apprehension of God's Word.

Illustrations are the part of our work that especially call out the use of this faculty. They are the windows that let in the light; the more transparent they are, the better they are. The less you remember of the illustration itself, and the more of the truth it is intended to express, the better is the illustration. Children who come home from the Sunday-school to retail the stories they have heard, have not been benefited, but rather injured by the illustration. Children who have received the truth through their fancy and now hold it in their memory, but have forgotten the agency by which they received it, testify to the skill of their teacher. The transparency of the illustration is its great value. Spurgeon has a little book, that he calls "Feathers for Arrows." It is filled with illustrations; just as the feather at the end of the arrow, so is the illustration connected with the truth. Its use is in making a straight course for the arrow; and when the barb of the arrow has fixed itself, the feather ceases to be of consequence, and may be cast aside as a valueless thing. Thus the Sunday-school teacher who has a divine truth to teach, may use an illustration addressing the fancy, and so reach the memory and the moral nature. If he is to let in light he must have some distinct truth to illuminate and he must have some light to let in. He must know the great object of all instruction: Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! And he must work in the power of the Holy Ghost, who alone is able to enlighten the mind and sanctify the soul.

All this I take for granted. Now let me give two or three rules to these Sunday-school teachers, in reference to THE USE OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHING. First, then, *let them be gathered from the Word of God itself.*

Those of you who are familiar with the writers of the seventeenth century, will bear me witness that their habit was to use *scripture to illustrate scripture*, and also that they had a wide acquaintance with the Word of God. That was the book of all others to them, and their acquaintance was gained by this habit of bringing all scripture in focus upon every scripture.

We are terribly forgetful in this respect. Old Dr. Benjamin Keach wrote a book on the emblems and symbols of the Word of God, and developed each one of them in full. Everything that is in this Book is there by Divine choice. There is not a fact in the history of the Old Testament that God did not put in this Book with a purpose. Every fact may be used for the enforcement of some positive truth. Look, then, for your illustrations in the Word of God. Use the life of Joseph, of David, of Daniel, and of the three children. Use the successes and failures recorded here to enforce your lessons.

Then I would like to direct your attention to the *scriptural*

similes that can be used. There is nothing so direct, in addressing the mind of a child, as the similes of scripture. Take, for instance, some illustration: you are speaking of the judgment; where can you find anything better to illustrate it than the "thief in the night?" Speaking of the service of Christ; can you find anything that more admirably expresses it than the yoke: "Take My yoke upon you." Jesus has one part, the disciple, having the other, puts his head in the end of the yoke. You are speaking of difficulties that beset a child of rebellion; can you find anything better to illustrate it, than what Jesus said to Saul of Tarsus, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," as the ox against the very goad that is used to send him forward. These are similes, and we should use them as illustrations of the truths we teach

Then *take the parables*, those matchless pictures of Christ's own wisdom, which go to interpret the best of everything on this earth. How beautifully are they brought out in all their details, and yet all calculated to carry home the one truth! There are some people that would make the parables go on all fours; find meanings in every little detail. The parables are to illustrate some truth, and the details are grouped around the incident to help remember that. I heard a discourse from a doctor of divinity, on the parable of the man who went down from Jerusalem and fell among thieves, in which he made a symbol of each detail. Those that passed by on the other side were representatives of the other dispensation; they could not help him. The good Samaritan was the Lord Jesus Christ. He poured in oil and wine; these were the two sacraments. He carried him into the inn; that was the church. The servants there were the ministers; the two pieces of silver, that he gave them, were the salaries of the ministers—I thought that was the most natural part of the whole. And so he went all through the story. A friend of mine was with me, and asked me how I liked it. I told him there was only one trouble; he had left out a very important part. "Why, what do you mean?" said he. "Why," I told him, "he didn't tell us anything about that beast; and as it must have been the same kind of a beast which our Lord rode upon into Jerusalem, there were probably personal reasons why he didn't want to mention that." There are ways of using parables, which will make them teach anything you wish. A man came to me one day, and said he wanted to instruct me in the Word of God. Well, I told him, that is what I want above all things. He began with the parable of the hid treasure; I saw what he was driving at. His idea was that the hid treasure was the church; the field was to be the world. The person that bought the field was the Lord Jesus Christ; by-and-bye, He was going to dig up the treasure, and the church

would come out. As soon as he had finished, I said "Is it not strange! Something seems a little dishonest about that parable: He went and bought that field, knowing there was a large treasure in it, of which the owner knew nothing, and yet he did not tell him of it." He saw at once that the point of his parable was gone; he was using the parable to teach a falsehood. Use the parables as Mr. Moody does; when he tells the story of Daniel, it is just as if you were reading from a newspaper; just as if you had gone down to Wall Street, and met the treasurer of some great corporation there. Daniel is just as real. That is the way to bring out the illustrations of scripture, and especially the parables of our Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ when on earth, was continually using scripture parables and Old Testament quotations; even when He hung upon the cross, His very cry was a quotation from the Old Testament scripture, and now that He has ascended to heaven, and has sent us the revelations of John, they are full of Old Testament quotations. Draw your illustrations from the Word of God.

Secondly, I would have you *fashion your illustrations after the Word of God.* To those which are your own and original give the form of the Word of God. One of the books that has lived, and the only book, says Lord Macaulay, that beginning at the cabin has worked its way into the palace, is Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. The paper and the press-work of the first edition were for the humblest condition of men, and yet, if you will read Macaulay's essay on Pilgrim's Progress, you will find that he declares that, for every purpose of a teacher, the language and composition of that book are beyond compare. Why? Because it is fashioned on the Old and New Testaments of God's truth. Take the emblems of Gotthold; they are fashioned after the likeness of God's Word. Recall that little parable of the piece of clay lying for a long time by the side of a tea rose. When it was taken away from the side of the rose it was filled with the perfume that had come from its companion. It is a parable after the likeness of those in the Word of God, seizing the most common place experience and turning it into truth. What teaches better the relation of our souls to Jesus? All our fragrance comes from our companionship with him. The more closely we cling to His side, the more are we sweet savoured unto God, and the more are we pleasant to our fellow man. Take John Paul Richter's parables; we remember the one where he tells us that, as he walked in his garden in the morning, he saw a little pearl—a glistening dew-drop. Towards evening, he walked in his garden again and searched for it, but it had gone. He looked up and saw in the sky the rainbow, and this was his thought: God has taken that thing of beauty from the earth, and set it in

the sky. The same drop that caught the light of the dawn, is now spanning the arch of the evening sky, in the bow of the covenant. This is the illustration, as he uses it, of the death of children; they are bright and beautiful in the morning, and are transferred to the glory and kingdom of God. These are illustrations of fashioning parables after the Word of God. I am willing to go further, and say that this old King James' version, with its "thee" and "thou," with its technical language of the old Saxon, is the best. Like Baalam, take up your parable and form your illustrations from things you see, after the likeness of God's word.

Keep within the observation of the children, when you use analogy. If there is one thing more abhorant than another, in a Sunday-school, it is a fiction. I know people that make up their stories as they go along. I have heard people get up in Sunday-school, and tell stories that I have heard ever since I was a baby, only they have located the occurrence in their own place. What is the effect; if two men succeed each other within thirty days, and each tells the same incident, and each locates it in his own neighborhood, the children think they are a pack of lies: that no such thing ever happened. That will soon destroy the confidence of the children. There is great danger in telling old stories to the children; they are very keen to detect shams, and you should be very careful not to tell them such stories as grown up people would be likely to call "whoppers." I would have very great care exercised to keep within the region of probabilities. I have heard a man tell a story about an excellent missionary. I have no doubt that the person from whom I heard it had told it so many times that he had really come to believe it. He said that the missionary's mother was carrying him through the jungle, when she saw a big old lion asleep. She was trying to steal away, but she stepped on a dry stick; it cracked and the lion jumped up on his feet, and looked at them (I am telling you the story just as I heard him tell it), shook his head and said "woo-oo;" then he lashed his tail violently from side to side, looked at them again, shook his head, and said "woo-oo-oo;" then he turned around two or three times one way, and two or three times the other way, looked at them again, and said "woo-oo-oo;" and then he put his head down between his paws, and went to sleep again. He told the children that, as an instance of special providence, and the children said it was a "whopper." Now, I am not saying that it is not true; it may be true, but is it probable? And it is not within the observation of children. When you are talking to children, there are a great many things that will suggest themselves as appropriate illustrations, that are within their observation. Dr. Hart, in one

of his books, says: take such things for instance as the sign; did you go down the street and see "To Let," on the house? Yes. Well, your soul is to let. Such a thing as the two rowers on the sides of the boat; the necessity of their rowing together, in order to make the boat go forward and yet keep in line, is an illustration of faith and works; you must have both in order to make progress in the Christian life. Then the illustration of the trough for feeding horses and sheep: If it is put up at the ordinary height for horses, the sheep cannot reach it; how much better if the box is placed at the proper height for sheep; then both can use it. And he uses that as an illustration of teaching, putting the food so high that the children cannot reach it. All these are common-place things. It may be that you have had a wonderful experience. So did Jonah; and yet you can read the whole book of Jonah through, and you do not find him saying a word about it, when he got to Nineveh. He kept within the range of probabilities there.

Another point: *be jealous for the truth* when using an illustration. There are some men who have a habit of telling their stories anyway, whether they fit or not; just as that man did who had a good story about noise. He would stamp with his foot, and say, "Oh! that is a noise; speaking about noises reminds me"—and then he would go on and tell his story. He made a nail to hang his story on. They have a good story, and whether it fits into the lesson or not, they are bound to tell it; and so they try to dove-tail it into the lesson. They are not jealous for the truth. Better sacrifice a thousand good stories and illustrations, than for a moment take the child's mind from the truth before it.

And then, I think, it is a good thing to *know when to stop* in a story. When you have got out the point, stop. Don't drive on the head of a nail that has been driven home; it will rather loosen the nail. I remember well, old Bishop Johns, gone to his rest within the last four months, my teacher at the seminary, telling of a gentleman speaking on the platform, who got into a terrible place. The story ran away with him, and he did not know what to do with it. He had a man, and he secured an iceberg and put the man on it. He told the height of the iceberg, and the circumference of it; told how deep it went down into the water, and how it towered up like a spire; and then he had the sunshine come down, and the prismatic colors brought out. He took the man away up to the top, and he brought him down again. He made the iceberg twist around, and put the man on the other side. He had that man there, and he did not know what in the world to do with the iceberg, or what to do with the man; and after twisting it around, and turning it upside down, and having the ice and the water get in a very queer way, he sunk

it. The specific gravity of ice and water must have changed. When you have done with your story, sink it. There are some teachers who hang on too long to their stories, they are averse to dropping them when they have served their purpose.

Now, bear with me in a few words upon the way SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATES ITSELF. I believe that to be the apostle's meaning in First Corinthians, ii., 13. He tells us that we are to compare spiritual things with spiritual. If we are to gain the meaning of the Spirit, the Spirit must be the interpreter; and when we have so many books in one volume, they may well unravel the mysteries of each other, if we will treat them with the wisdom that God has designed they should be treated.

Let *book illustrate book.* There is a great unity in this volume; but it is a library, while it is a volume. I have had wonderful pleasure this winter in taking the first chapters of the book of Genesis, as an illustration of Second Corinthians, iv., 6, where Paul says "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts." And then that other passage, where he speaks of our regeneration as a new creation. How wonderfully that first chapter of Genesis will illustrate the work of God in the soul of man! And what a warrant we have in the apostle's language, for using it in that way! How can you understand Hebrews, without Leviticus? Take the one word, the key-note of the Hebrews: the word "Better" is the key-word there. Better than all was Jesus Christ; better than Moses; better than Joshua; to bring in a better testament; to have better promises; to provide a better substance; to give us better hope; to offer better sacrifices; to bring to light a better country, and to assure us of a better resurrection. The contrast is between this book and Leviticus. Leviticus is the shadow, and Hebrews is the substance. I heard some one, the other day, talking about the Garden of Eden, and the flaming sword; and he spoke about the cherubim having the flaming sword. There is no such record; the cherubim were not said to have anything to do with the flaming sword. If you will study the Word of God, you will find that the cherubim were put there for the same reason that they were put on the ark and the mercy-seat; they were the tokens of reconciliation. When he drove out the man and the woman, and put the flaming sword at the gate as a token of justice, he joined with it the token of reconciliation. He sent them out that they might learn how through the shedding of blood they could come in again. In the book of Revelation we read our return and right to the tree of life. We cannot understand the Revelation without reference to the Old Testament. If you will look further, you will find that the books of Ezekiel and Revelation are directly related, as voice and antiphone.

Present the predictions of the Bible with their fulfilment. People are very much afraid of the prophecies. Well, we will not talk about the unfulfilled prophecies: but I cannot pass them by without saying to you, my dear brethren, that I believe the promise of the personal coming of the Lord in His glory to gather His saints, is as much the key-note of the New Testament, as the coming of the Saviour to atone for the world is the key-note of the Old Testament. I believe that the Lord is to come more suddenly than we think. But already there are fulfilments that we can note. The book of Matthew is full of such phrases as this: "This happened that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet." It is a grand thing to show children how these prophecies have been fulfilled. Take the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, for instance; find out how many times that chapter is quoted in the New Testament, and attributed to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"—Twice is that quoted in the New Testament. You will find the whole of that chapter distinctly applied by our Lord Himself, and by His apostles, to our Redeemer; and yet the Jews believe that that chapter has nothing to do with Christ, but refers to the children of Israel.

I come now to something, to which, perhaps, some of my brethren of the ministry will not say amen. I wish to speak of *the types and anti-types of the scripture.* Nobody can understand the types, until they see the substance. Look at the drawing of an engine, and what do you know about it; but let an engineer come who has put one together, and he will tell you the whole story of the engine, from the drawings. So with the types; the old patriarchs knew little of the meaning of these symbols. We look back now, and we see that the tabernacle and the temple service all pointed to Christ. It was John the Baptist, who said, "Behold the lamb of God." "He must increase, but I must decrease." There are three ways of regarding the types. Some expositors hold that nothing is a type except those that the Lord Jesus Christ identifies as such; there are others that hold that only such as Christ and the apostles identify as such can be so regarded. But I am very radical; I believe that this Word of God contains all that can be gotten out of it. It is the wisdom of God, and everything that can be obtained from it to throw light upon the Lord Jesus, I hold to be a type; and I find a warrant for this view in First Corinthians, x., 11.—"Now all these things happened to them for ensamples." What can be more beautiful than that type of the mercy-seat? I have that pictured on a screen, for my children to look at: the ark, overlaid within and without with pure gold; the mercy-seat fitting into the crown; the cherubim at either end, with their out-spread wings; nothing

in the ark but the tables of stone. The voice of God came from the ark; it was a voice of justice and mercy: justice from the law, and mercy from the mercy-seat. There are hundreds of these types that are well worth bringing out in all their fulness of truth; and if you will use them for the children, they will be lessons of the best kind.

Now I want to say a word about *the Bible and nature.* If there is one object in life that ought to be sweeter to us than another, after the exposition of the Word of God, it is to make children think well of this beautiful world. Our old hymns call it a vale of tears, a place of shadows; but can you conceive of anything more beautiful than this glorious world, which is our home until God takes us to himself? Just as the miracles interpret the forces of this world, so do the parables interpret the forms of this world. What can you know of this wonderful miracle that God is doing every spring, when the seed falls on the earth, and the ground closes over it, and then it reopens and the plant appears, producing from one seed a bushel sometimes, as well as in the marvel of the multiplied loaves? What can you know of the wonderful process by which the water is gathered up through the rootlets of the vine, and imprisoned in the purple clusters, and changed to wine; what can you know of this force, except from the word of Jesus, and the water that blushed to own its God? The force of the earth in its ordinary course, is illustrated by the miracle of Christ, in His intervening power. In the sun, we see the sun of righteousness shining upon us; in the moon, we see the glory of the Father reflected in the face of Jesus Christ. The stars are

> Ever singing as they shine,
> The hand that made us is Divine.

The water as it babbles in the cooling streams, the rose, the lily of the valley, the vine, all are symbols of the usefulness and beauty of Jesus; everything, Jesus; Christ, all; Christ in all. So shall you educate the imaginations of the children to receive, and their memories to retain and to use, that Christian truth; and you yourselves shall be lifted up, as on angels' wings, to see with John things which are unspeakable, but which the sanctified imagination realizes.

May God give us to understand the use of illustration in Sunday-school teaching, and make us successful in illustrating scripture by scripture. May we strive to be bees, gathering honey everywhere, and not spiders, drawing all our resources from ourselves. So shall we not only bring souls to Christ, but educate them in the use of God's holy Word.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LONG WALK

FOR

YOUNG CONVERTS.

ADDRESS BY THE REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR., D.D., ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1876.

"Can two walk together except they be agreed?"—*Amos iii.*, 3.

This evening I am to speak chiefly to those who have lately come into the fellowship of the gospel, and who purpose entering into the communion of the church. I turn aside from the course of exhortation to those who know not the Lord, with the desire to deepen, if I may, the purpose and determination of those who are in the fold to stand fast. Such persons have found Christ; or, rather, have been found by Christ. They have laid aside their slothfulness; they have lost their loneliness; they have declared war against sin; Jesus Christ is no longer to them a stranger; he has become their friend, and through these weeks and months of their new life, they have been testing His fidelity, and putting to the proof His promises. With Him they have begun to take a long walk, and that an endless one. This way is declared by the Psalmist, to be the "way everlasting;" not an eternal way, since it has a beginning, but an unending way, since the path grows brighter and brighter even unto perfect day. They are continually exhorted by the apostle to walk according to a distinct rule, a path which is clearly marked. To the Colossians St. Paul writes, "as ye have received Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." The first act of trust,—the first influence of His presence,—the first devotion to His service,—is

the model, the sample experience of every after-stage in the Divine life. Just as you received Him, so walk in Him day by day, in confession of sin, in acceptance of restoring grace, and in new consecration to deeds of valor and devotion for His glory. I suppose that the best parable we have of this Christian life, under the figure given by the prophet, is that walk of the two disciples from Jerusalem to Emmaus, after the resurrection of the Lord; you note first, that they walk together; they had many questionings of mind, much care-taking, great fear. Suddenly they were conscious of a presence with them; it was strange to them in all its appearance and its claim of relation. Bye-and-bye they learned who the stranger was, but only after He opened to them the scriptures, and made their hearts burn within them. When the discovery had been made, they invited this Jesus whom they had met, and with whom, in much fearfulness and doubt, they had walked, to be their guest. They received Him into their house, and gave Him a place at their table, and so they learned the life of trust in a Christ constantly revealing Himself in new relations and adaptations to the soul.

Even so we start with the fact of the companionship of Christ. We grow into the knowledge of His peculiar person and power in our behalf. We reach new recognitions of the Lord, who is our companion. We have attained the spirit of the walk when we gradually make Him one with us in our seasons of retirement, of festivity, of labor, about the table, in the house, and wheresoever God may have appointed us our path of life. It will be greatly good for those of you who belong to the Lord Jesus, if you will, just for a moment, look back to the moment when you gave yourself to Him, and, as though there had been no parenthesis of deadness or indifference, on the part of some of you, you should now renew the old attachment and start again on a long walk with Christ.

I. The prophet asks the question, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" and the form of the question undoubtedly implies, first of all, The real presence of the manifested God in Christ. You cannot begin living by the power of Christ until the fact of a living Christ has been seized by your faith. The Roman Catholic church has done much to bring near to the hearts of the people the real living presence of Christ, and I am persuaded that much of its activity has sprung from that perception. And, yet, in that church you have only two aspects of the life of Christ presented: He is either a child in the arms of the Madonna, or He is a dead Christ, on the cross. If this presence of Jesus in His infancy and in His dying shall exert so manifest a control over the emotions and become so positive a motive in life, how much rather when we regard Him, not now as dead,

but as risen again, not now only as risen but as ascended, nor only so, but as having fulfilled the promise that He will come again; for, in the fourteenth chapter of John, at the eighteenth verse, He distinctly told His disciples, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." It was a marvel that perplexed their faith: "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more"; "Because I live ye shall live also." He anticipated the gathering together of the disciples in little groups, even as Christian experience and history have related us one to another; and He declared, in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." There is no possibility of a believer being without Christ. Wheresoever he goes, Christ goes with him; and two or three believers together, duplicate, triplicate the influence of the presence of Christ. Then the promise is, that when He thus comes to us by the Spirit, when He thus is in our midst, and we recognize Him as a common centre: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"; so that the apostle writes to the Hebrews, "We may boldly say, The Lord is my helper." This is the glorious fact which present faith has to grasp; not simply to look back upon the cross, there to see the reason of freedom from condemnation; nor only to look down into the sepulchre, and, seeing its emptiness, know that we are justified by His rising from the dead, nor yet, again, to look up into the heavens and behold Him standing as our Intercessor, but to recognize that in our midst, by our side, inseparate from our identity, is the living Christ, whom we can no more destroy or drive from the world than we can the influences of God's own unmanifested presence.

Sometimes this becomes the consciousness of the believer. It is a blessed thing when it is so. But whether he be conscious of it or not, he has a confidence in the fact. Sometimes he can almost touch Christ, so real does He become as a friend and companion; he can almost see Him. His prayer goes right into the ear of his Lord, as though whispered in secret communication from mouth to ear. This is a high experience and most joyful attainment. But whether one has it or not, dear friend, let him be satisfied that Presence is there, keeping him, guarding him, providing for him, watching over him in all the ways in which he goes. Walking with Christ implies the real presence of the real Lord. O! tell me what can dignify daily life like this? What can lift one up above the troubles and cares and anxieties of this world like that—to know that He who ruleth over all, and whose heart is overflowing with love, is by my right hand, to keep me; and is my rear-guard, to defend me?

II. Then, the prophet's language implies, secondly, ONENESS OF SENTIMENT WITH CHRIST: "Can two walk together, except they

be agreed?" There are two men whose faces I know well, but whose names I do not know, whom, every day of my life, I meet walking in the morning to their business, and at night returning to their homes. They are manifestly not casual acquaintances. They are in conference when they are conversing. Controversy I have never seen between them. The whole aspect of the men indicates an agreement. Indeed, I cannot see how one could walk twice a day with a man with whom he is keeping up a wordy war. It would seem that the Lord's language was literally true, "A house divided against itself cannot stand;" and two friends who are always controverting in opinion, after awhile come to desire that there shall be a distance between them in space, even as there is in sentiment. If we are walking constantly with the living Lord, the implication is that we have entered into His thoughts, and it is only here that any believer can find the secret of constancy. If you have a mind of your own, which is contrary to His mind, you will want to be far from Him in your daily living. If you have a will which is contrary to His will, His presence is a continual rebuke, and the confidence that He is there is to have a mentor at one's side, and that which is the great privilege of the earnest, trusting disciple becomes the great trial of the one who is half-hearted in service. To have one's thoughts consent to Christ's thoughts, one's love filled with Christ's love, and reciprocating the great love He bore us in His work and in His Spirit, to have one's purposes daily yielding to Christ's higher purposes, to have one's actions controlled by this invisible Presence, Whom, having not seen, we love, Whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable;—this is to take the long walk without slip, without shadow, without care.

Dear friends, realizing, somewhat, the presence of Christ with you, learn to walk with Him, as a disciple walks with the Master. How often we see it in the little child holding the hand of the teacher, and going with equal steps, as thought and experience leads. So accept the guidance of this invisible Christ, and let Him lead you on, governing and controlling your thinking, as well as your doing. Learn to walk with Christ, as a child with a father, in absolute confidence that He will take care that nothing shall happen for which He will not provide. Learn to walk with Christ, as an inferior with a superior, dignified by nearness to Him. Oh, how pitiful, in some Christians, is the shame to be known as having the presence of Christ! There is not a situation in life, in which you are, which is not infinitely inferior to the God of all grace, and upon which He does not look as a very little thing; and you only glorify your influence, you only exalt your attainments, you only consecrate that which is confessed by

men to be power, when you submit to Him, as one greatly superior, leading and controlling. So He reminds us, over and over again, of the great grace of Jesus, in permitting us, thus sinful in ourselves, infirm in our best experiences, full of error in our minds, our wills, our loves, to walk with Him by the way.

III. The third implication given in the text is, GROWTH IN FRIENDSHIP. If we walk continually as agreed in sentiment, surely the unity of those that are companions shall increase. It is never to me a marvel that young believers become somewhat inconsistent and wayward. The spirit which leads one to point the finger at the first inconsistency, or the first lapse of a new-born child in the family of grace, is a very silly thing. It is utter ignorance of the whole work of the Spirit upon the life of man. But I tell you I am surprised when I look down at men and women who for years have been professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, who have had opportunity to study His character, to be brought into the knowledge of His person, to understand His gracious relations, and hear of them as wayward and inconstant; when they have had five, ten, twenty years of knowledge, and yet have not grown in friendship; when the company of drunkards is more grateful than the company of saints; when the mere frivolity of worldly attraction and amusement is more to their liking than the songs of the people of God and the exposition of the Word of God; when they stand as beacons of warning to young saints, rather than attractive influences into the higher life. This is sad. Weep, O! ye angels of God, over souls that know Christ and yet dishonor Him. And yet, dear friends, if we walk with Him agreed in sentiment, we must walk in a continually intensifying friendship, and he who does not increase in friendship for Christ, casts a shadow of self-delusion over his profession of Christ. Methinks there will be sorrow and sadness in that great day, when souls who have eaten and drunk with Christ in the Church shall hear Him say, "Depart! depart! I never knew you." Let us fear lest our Christian life be only a sham for the eye of man, which God shall see through and through.

If our friendship grows, it shall grow in unity of spirit. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians, at the sixth chapter and seventeenth verse, the apostle Paul declares that we are then brought into one spirit: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." If you note that text, you will see he flanks it on each side with sinful indulgences,—how those that have gone astray have been conformed to the spirit of those with whom they have been associated; and just as these have been degraded, so "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." I must have the spirit of Christ, if I am to grow in His friendship,—the spirit of self-renunciation, of condescension, of gentleness, of denial for

the blessing of others; each believer in his relation to the Lord, with whom he walks, should seek to grow in these attainments. So we are declared by the apostle to be those who grow in the knowledge of Christ, that we may be transformed after His Spirit—"not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit," and other passages to which you can easily refer. These are the implications of those who walk with a real living Christ,—oneness of sentiment with Him, and daily growth in His friendship and communion.

Now, I suppose that many of you have come into this very relation and experience. Having entered upon this walk, mind these few cautions:

1. *Keep step with Christ* as you walk. That which in the marching army is a regulation of the code, is no less needful in the quiet, peaceful walk of the believer with his Lord. O! dear young friends, remember the dignity of your companionship. The apostle, in Coloss. i., 10, says, "Walk worthy of the Lord." Walk so that He shall never be brought into shame, so that His name shall never be impugned, so that the gospel shall never be degraded in the eyes of men. Let me tell you, that those who are in business with you, brother, read you more than they do their Bible. Ye are "the epistles of God, known and read" of those about you, and the views which multitudes have of Jesus are derived from the lives, daily, hourly of His people. Keep step with Christ. Where He goes do you go. Where He cannot go, do you never go. I sat, yesterday, talking with a young friend about worldly indulgences, and I put this simple question to him: "Would you, if you were under deep personal conviction of sin, if you had been brought down under great sorrow, if you needed wise guidance for your soul and sympathy in your grief, would you go to a Christian whom you had met the night before in the playhouse, or at a ball?" "No, I certainly should not." And yet, he told me of those, behind whom he was sheltering himself in indulgence, as having been seen in both places. God forbid that any person in this church should thus ally himself with the things that are spotted by the flesh! But if we have no other plan of action than this, it is enough: "I am Christ's keeper in this world, even as Christ is my keeper; I am set for the defence of the gospel, even as Christ is set for my defence." And it is the great responsibility of every believer so to stand, so to walk, so to run, that there may be no mistake as to whom he belongs, whom he serves, and what is the tendency and influence of his life. I have said over and over again in this place that I believe the great curse of the society of New York is not its drunkenness, is not its habitual licentiousness, but is its mass of unconverted church members. If the membership of the churches of New

York walked step by step with Christ, sin would hide its face and flee away from all reputable associations.

2. Let me say, again, that not only are you to submit yourself to Christ, and keep step with Him, but *lean upon Christ.* I read in Solomon's Song (viii., 5), that the bride "cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved," and I learn from the image, these two facts: that she cast her weight upon Christ, and she kept near to Christ. I cannot lean upon something that is far from me, and when I lean, I bear down my infirmities upon Him, that I may be sustained. And yet, some persons have tried to improve God's Word, and I suppose many of you, when I quote the text, will think it has been quoted wrong, for these improvers of the Bible write it, "She cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon the arm of her beloved." Ah! the arm of Christ is not enough for me. There are times when I need more than the arm of Christ. It is to lean upon a whole Christ, "Leaning upon her beloved," the Spirit of God says. There are times when I need to lean upon the Godhead of Christ, for manhood will not be sufficient. There are other times when I need the manhood in sympathy. There are times when I need to rest upon every distinct attribute of the Lord Jesus, all the offices in His own maintenance of grace. It is a whole Christ upon whom we lean, and with whom we walk. Now, I beg of you, thus come to Christ, with the intention, from the first step to the last, of leaning upon Him; if you expect to stand straight up as a Christian, you have made a great mistake; your attitude is always oblique, for you are resting, you are leaning upon, you are supported by this invisible Saviour, who has promised to keep you in all your ways.

3. Then, third, *avoid all stumbling-stones.* There are sinners all around to trip you up. The apostle advises you to beware of these, for he was not ignorant of Satan's devices. He writes us (Eph., v., 15), "See, then, that ye walk circumspectly: not as fools but as wise." Mark you, He is writing to Christians, when He says this, for some of them walked as fools, and forgot the Divine wisdom. We are surrounded with things that tempt us astray. There is no life so much in danger as that which has just started on the road with Christ. Satan attacks such with all his weapons. His effort is to dwarf, to destroy the believer, if he may. Now, I beg you give all these things a wide margin. You remember the quaint story of Dean Swift, who advertised for a coachman, and when the applicants came, he put the simple test question to them, "How near can you drive to a precipice?" One man answered that he could drive within three feet; another one foot; a self-confident Englishman said that he could pass safely within three inches, if he had a well-balanced coach; but a

witty Irishman replied, "Well, an' it plase yer Riverence, I'd jist kape as far off as I can;" and the Dean, well pleased, said, "You're the man I want." Let us give as wide a berth to the precipice as possible. If you sit down and ask yourself, "What's the harm?" be sure that one wheel is over the precipice. Just as soon as the Christian gets into that attitude, he is in danger. As soon as he begins to apologise for the thing he is doing, he has a sad cause to defend. You had better give it up; enter a *nolle prosequi*, as the lawyers say. Begin anew. Avoid all stumbling blocks, and especially be careful, ye Christians, how ye put stumbling-stones in the people's way. Forego things that are even lawful to you, rather than that others fall; remembering the words of the apostle (Rom xiv., 13), "Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

4. Then, lastly, *look forward to an endless walk.* An old writer says, "Enoch started for a walk with God; he walked all through the day, and God took him, and he kept on walking, and he has never come back." For you who start to walk with Christ, there is no end; we but begin in this world, continuing the journey in a life-long companionship; but O! when comes the hour of death, when everyone else ceases to walk with us, when all they can do is to stand by our bedside and weep over us, when not a word of sympathy or love, or an office of help can relieve us, Oh! what shall we do then? How sweetly David says: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." It seems to me I would walk close to Christ for seventy years if I could only be certain that He would walk with me through the dark into which I see so many plunge hopelessly, despairingly. If there were no joy in this companionship now, to be sure that He would be with me then would be compensation enough. And then, when we pass through the water, and come to the gates of pearl, over the portal is written, "Everlasting!" "The everlasting way!" In Revelations, iii., 4, John tells us we shall walk with him in white. And (Rev. xiv., 4) "These are they which follow the Lamb whitherso ever He goeth." Not a single step in heaven is taken away from the side of our gracious Lord. We are brought into companionship more close and into revelations of His grace more satisfying. Now, dear friends, dismiss from your minds the idea that this presence of Christ is but for a time. It is our eternal life begun; it is the hidden companionship attained; it is the eternal growth already manifested. Look forward to it as your portion forever. Strive after progress in the knowledge of

Christ, in the love and fellowship of Christ, in delight in the Saviour; but O! be sure that that Saviour who hath said, "I will never leave thee" on earth, never will leave thee in heaven.

These are the cautions I would give to young Christians. Keep step with Christ; always lean upon a whole Christ; avoid all stumbling-blocks in the way, and look forward to that pleasing portion of ever being with the Lord in sweet companionship at home.

But some of you have never started on this endless walk. You are still walking in the path that leadeth down to death. My dear friends, you must meet Christ, if you are to walk with Him; and the place where you can meet Christ for this companionship is the place of the cross. If you will now come and submit yourselves to the Saviour that died for you; if you will give your confidence to the Saviour that rose again for you, He has said, "I will manifest Myself to you as I do not unto the world." Who will meet Christ at the place of the cross, and begin this day to walk with the invisible Saviour, whose face we shall bye-and-bye see?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCLUSION.

Unclasp, O man, the syren hand of pleasure,
Let the gay folly go!
A few quick years will bring the unwelcome ending;
Then whither dost thou go,
To endless joy or woe?

Clasp a far truer hand—a kinder, stronger—
Of Him the crucified;
Let in a deeper love into thy spirit,
The love of Him who died,
And now is glorified!—*Bonar.*

And now, dear reader, our task of privilege and pleasure is nearly at an end, for there remains but little to add. We appreciate very much the privilege we have enjoyed of seeing so many excellent expositions of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through the press. The pleasure has been commensurately great, for nothing but the most encouraging support has been received from all quarters, and we rest assured that this volume will be welcomed into many a home as a herald of "glad tidings." Our main effort has been to make it essentially a representative work—one that shall be acknowledged as wholly free from sectarianism, and not written in the interest of any denomination or individuals, but simply for the good of the cause, and as a help to Christians throughout the world. Should it fall (as no doubt it will) into the hands of unconverted persons, its

teachings are in charge of God the Holy Ghost, and, with His blessing, they will be applied in some inscrutable way to the enhancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. We earnestly ask Christian readers to pray for such a result.

It is hardly necessary to say, that to the New York Gospel Tent must be given the credit, if any there be, for the production of the book. The influence of that work—the first real summer revival witnessed in any large city in this country—is destined to be largely felt in the future; much more so than it is at the present time, for there were not a few men of remarkable character and power who there became "new creatures in Christ Jesus," who will inevitably make their mark as good soldiers of the Cross.

We have heretofore omitted to mention that throughout the whole period that the canvas house of God reared its stately head heavenwards, a faithful few devoted their time to a noon-day prayer-meeting, which was greatly blessed. Those who attended were mostly ladies, and the special object of the summer worship was always remembered at the throne of grace. Nor was the cause of temperance neglected, special meetings being held each Sunday afternoon, and many there were who were rescued from Satan's most seductive snare and the world's greatest curse, by means of the simple Word of God which informs all men that in "the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength"—strength, *and the only strength* that can snatch the slave to the cup from a wretched death and a worse hell beyond. There is no cure for intemperance to be found outside the gospel, and the sooner that fact is recognized, the better for the cause.

We would suggest to those who in the future may undertake similar work to that carried on in the tent, a very simple but effective means of inducing non-church-goers and the public generally to attend the meetings, especially in large towns. Let a few young men take up positions within a reasonable distance of the place of worship about an hour each evening previous to the time of meeting, and give to passers-by a neat, printed slip, inviting all to join in the service. This may seem a very trivial thing, but it should not be overlooked on that account. The effect on the attendance will be really astonishing. Again, we would strongly recommend a preliminary service of song—say fifteen

FELTER

minutes—with the doors open. There are always people strolling about who have no particular object in view, who, by these means, may be induced to give the Word of God a hearing. Diplomacy and tact are as necessary in evangelistic labors as in worldly matters.

In connection with the Rev. Dr. Tyng's tent, it is but justice to say, that the New York *Daily Witness* was in sympathy with, and did much to support the summer evangelisation of the city, by furnishing daily reports of the services, thus keeping them continually before the public. The support of the press generally is much needed in work of this kind, and every effort should be made to secure it, no matter where the location may be.

The American Tract Society was also in thorough sympathy with the work, and did a noble part, in giving up the services of their veteran missionary, good old Uncle John Vassar, whose helpfulness was felt by all who came in contact with him. His child-like faith and simplicity took firm hold of the anxious inquirers, and many were the souls awarded him by the Master.

Heretofore, we have carefully avoided anything approaching eulogy, or even mention, of individuals, believing that those who worked during the hot season had their reward in the knowledge that they were laboring for the Lord, and we content ourselves with saying in this concluding chapter that the Executive Committee of the New York Gospel Tent was composed of the Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, jr., D.D., Rev. William Humpstone, William P. Southworth, R. H. Macy, Edward L. Owen, D. N. Beardsley and S. T. Williams. Of these, Mr. W. P. Southworth was the Chairman and Director, who along with many others, kept steadily at the revival throughout its four months of life.

We now conclude, as we began, with an expression of the hope that in the coming summer the Lord will have dedicated to Him canvas tabernacles in the principal cities of the United States, wherein His glorious gospel may be proclaimed. Without doubt, the gospel tent is an excellent means of reaching the masses and of sustaining religious interest, where, in the past, there has been nothing but apathy—nay, even deadness. The success of this movement, and of those in Brooklyn, chronicled in preceding pages, should stimulate Christian effort throughout the land in this direction. There are two points we here wish to

mention to the reader, and first, that we shall be happy at all times to furnish any practical information and particulars about this special kind of work which we may have omitted to give in this volume, on application being made to us, addressed 44 East Forty-third street, New York City; and secondly, we shall be glad to hear from our readers on the contents of this book generally, or as to any particular chapter being used in the nature of a tract, or otherwise, for general distribution.

And now, ere we put the pen down, we adopt the words of the poet whose name appears at the commencement of this chapter:

We thank Thee for the blood,
The blood of Christ, Thy Son;
The blood by which our peace is made,
Our victory is won:
Great victory o'er hell, and sin, and woe,
That needs no second fight, and leaves no second foe.

We thank Thee for the grace
Descending from above,
That overflows our widest guilt,
The eternal Father's love:
Love of the Father's everlasting Son,
Love of the Holy Ghost, Jehovah, three in One.

We thank Thee for the hope,
So glad, and sure, and clear,
It holds the drooping spirit up
Till the long dawn appear:
Fair hope! with what a sunshine does it cheer
Our roughest path on earth, our dreariest desert here!

We thank Thee for the crown
Of glory and of life;
'Tis no poor with'ring wreath of earth,
Man's prize in mortal strife:
'Tis incorruptible as is the throne,
The Kingdom of our God and His Incarnate Son.

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